





MY PEARL.

BY

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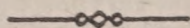


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MY PEARL.



CHAPTER I.

THE sun tarried long that morning, as if loth to arise, but at last burst forth from its bank of mist and fog with glorious splendor; the clouds broke and scattered, rolling away in dark, heavy masses, leaving the sun to its triumphant course. Two young men sat on the piazza of a mountain hotel silently watching this wonder of the dawning day.

“Magnificent!” exclaimed one of them, springing to his feet, as the sun suddenly appeared. “I tell you, Rob, this pays for getting up early, and waiting long. I never saw anything much finer than this in all my travels.”

And Robert Spencer broke out with a line of the hymn,

“Joy to the world, the Lord is come!”

An astonished look came over the face of

Henry Mansfield. "Yes, the great Lord of day has come indeed in regal glory this morning."

"And the blessed Christ is risen to-day. The glory of the one reminds me of the other."

Henry Mansfield's only reply to this was an impatient exclamation and gesture as he resumed his seat, while the two young men relapsed into their former silence, the silence of true lovers of Nature in the presence of one of her marvelous transformations, a silence into which voice and spirit must subside if one would fully appreciate and enjoy her miracles of beauty. In silence men worship and wonder, and then coy Nature reveals to them secrets that gladden the heart.

The two young men were cousins, of about the same age, and both artists. They had grown up and been educated together. They were as tenderly attached to each other as though they were brothers. Henry Mansfield had just returned from a two years stay in foreign lands. During this long absence both had changed, but their affection had not weakened. And yet the renewal of their companionship was much like the forming of a new acquaintance, for in heart and life they had drifted

apart in many respects. It is sad but true, that, as a rule, separated friends grow different from one another, while those who are constantly together grow more and more alike; in daily intercourse each influences and moulds the other, all unconsciously. Even the frequent interchange of letters does not entirely alter the fact, for letters lack the magnetism of eye, voice, and warm heart-beat. So in the glad meeting of these cousins there was an element of disappointment. They had come up from the city the previous evening to this mountain resort, where Spencer's sisters were spending the summer.

Young Mansfield was the first to break the silence. "Rob, what a glorious day this will be for a sketch. We must start out directly after breakfast."

"I never go sketching on Sunday."

"Why not, old chap? What is your objection?"

"I do not think it is right. You know I wrote you, Henry, that my ideas on religious subjects were entirely changed."

"I remember. Change them all you like; but I cannot see the use of carrying them to

any such ridiculous extreme. What harm can there be in catching and retaining such beautiful pictures as these; what better work could you be doing on any day? Why, man alive! what are you thinking about? Are you crazy, to be willing to lose such a chance? We may not have finer effects of cloud shadows on the mountains in all the time we stay. Will you lose them all for a foolish whim?"

Robert Spencer's lips came together in a very decided way. I shall not go sketching on Sunday, whatever I may lose."

"Bah! what sheer nonsense. Rob, I am afraid you are entirely spoiled."

The stern look vanished from Spencer's fine face. "Henry, if my religion has spoiled me, it is because I have so little of it. What I have is my great comfort and joy. I wish I was more completely changed."

Mansfield looked up in evident vexation and disgust. The silence which followed was broken by Agnes Spencer, Robert's older sister, who glided upon the piazza with a cheery "good morning." She was tall and slight, with a pale, sweet face, dark hair and eyes, set off by her white dress, and of "gentle gesture." She was

not handsome, yet there was a charm about her. Was it her beaming smile, or a certain restful, peaceful expression, seldom seen on a young countenance? Firm lines around her mouth, very much like her brother's, told of force of character.

"Cousin Agnes looks as though she had fought and conquered," were Henry Mansfield's words, and they expressed the truth.

Both the young men brightened as they returned her salutation. Her brother took the hand she laid on his shoulder in both of his, and looked lovingly into her face. "Glad to see you, dear; do you not call this a lovely morning?" giving the little hand some caressing touches.

"Cousin Agnes, you have come too late to see the magnificent sunrise, or rather the bursting forth of the sun from its prison of cloud and fog. I am sorry you missed it."

"Oh! I saw it all from my window. I am always on the watch for the sunrise, and this one was unusually glorious."

"It was a delightful surprise to us. I began to think our early rising was all for naught."

Then they talked of the view. Mansfield

wondered how far distant the lake was, which lay in the valley, sparkling in the sunlight.

Agnes pointed out beauties in the landscape that she had noticed during her long stay, which even their artist eyes had not yet discovered.

Again the silence of full enjoyment fell upon the three, until Mansfield broke the spell by introducing the vexed question.

"Cousin Agnes, what is the regulation way of keeping Sunday up here among the clouds? There are no grand churches and cathedrals, I am happy to say; you must have to go to the woods to worship."

"Do you see that spire yonder? There is a little church, nestling among the hills, where I go every Sabbath morning; will not one of you gentlemen be my escort to-day?"

"Pray have me excused Cousin Agnes; all my worshiping will have to be out in this deliciously bracing air. 'The groves were God's first temples;' they are the kind I like."

"Then perhaps you will go with me this *afternoon* for a walk, Cousin Henry."

"A walk? Why Cousin Agnes, do you mean to say that you go for a walk on Sunday?" with a raising of the eyebrows. "Of course

I'll go, and call myself a fortunate fellow, but for this morning's excursion, Rob will have to play the part of knight-errant."

"Very well, you shall be excused and Robert too, if he feels too tired to take the walk."

"Oh! Rob, he might as well go, he declines joining me in a little sketching expedition; thinks it is wrong. Where did he get such nonsensical notions? do you share them?"

But Agnes Spencer's eyes were fixed on the distant mountains and clouds, which she was quietly watching; she seemed not to hear.

"It is all a whim; is it any worse to use pencil and brush a little, than to sit here on the piazza and read Carlyle?"

Agnes glanced down at the title of the book in her brother's hand—"Sartor Resartus" and a shadow flitted across her face.

"What particular merit can there be in sitting in church, and hearing some dull preacher ventilate his ignorance and stupidity? It surely must be more elevating to the soul, to be out among Nature's beautiful scenes, listening to her myriad voices; there are wonderful sermons in rocks, waters, and mountains, if we are only ready to hear. I am thoroughly disgusted with

churches, and as for all this goody talk about keeping the Sabbath, it is just foolishness. Why is one day better than another, or different from another? They are all alike to me; what it is right to do on *one* day, it is right to do on *another*.

Agnes was all attention now; her earnest eyes were watching her cousin intently; a peculiar smile on her face seemed to say, "you are in no mood for argument just at present." She loosened an antique brooch from her throat: "Cousin Henry did you ever see my pin that once belonged to my mother?"

"Oh yes! I remember seeing you wear it long ago; I always admired it; it is a beauty; but the handsome pearl in the center is gone; is it lost?"

"Yes, I lost it this morning, to my regret."

"What a great pity! it spoils the pin."

"It does indeed;" then very earnestly, "Cousin Henry, Sunday is my pearl among all the days of the week; when I lose my Sunday, my week is spoiled. But I must go and see if Grace is ready for breakfast." Then she flitted inside.

When the two gentlemen found themselves

again alone, they did not incline to resume the discussion but talked of other things. "Rob, there goes Hillard, I do believe; I should know that strut in Greenland; what sends him up here? Following up Cousin Agnes as of yore, I venture to say; great good it will do him; that fellow has never suffered much from a sense of inferiority."

Robert gave one of his long hearty laughs—"No, I think not, but that is a queer way of putting it."

"Bravo! what a peal! that is not a Sunday laugh; how dare you? Cousin Agnes will be horrified."

"Not a bit of it; she does not think it a sin to laugh on Sunday, neither do I. Sundays are her most joyful days."

"Well I believe it, her pearl of all days she called it; I cannot see what she finds in it to make it seem so valuable; it is past my comprehension. But she is the pearl of all women, if she is a little strict; I can understand *that*."

It was not exaggeration nor affectation in Agnes Spencer. when she spoke of the Sabbath as her "pearl of all days." During the years since the death of her father and mother,

while so many cares and anxieties had burdened her heart, she had found out the value of her Sabbaths; she had learned the necessity, the sweetness, of keeping them holy—consecrated. They were her rest days, her glad days, when she rolled off her burdens. “How can I make him understand what they are worth?” she asked herself many times that morning, as she recalled the words of her worldly cousin. Evidently two years residence abroad, had not increased his reverence for God’s day. As she wondered what her life would be without this blessed day she repeated softly—

“O day of rest and gladness,
O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,—
Most beautiful and bright—”

until her little sister Grace exclaimed “Why Aggie you have said those same words over ever so many times, why do you not say something else?”

Agnes smiled—“Because, Grace, my heart is so full of joy that God has given us this blessed day, that I cannot think of anything else.” The peace in her heart shone in her face. Grace noticed the light, for she whispered to her

brother, as she climbed upon his lap—"Aggie looks just like an angel to-day." Grace read the slightest change in the face that she loved, for Agnes—sister and mother too—was the embodiment of all that was good in the child's mind. The child's words seemed to trouble Robert Spencer; he knew how frail his older sister was; he astonished Grace by replying—"I only hope this strong mountain air will soon make her look less angelic."

At the appointed time, Agnes, Robert and Grace Spencer—with some others from the hotel—wended their way down to the little church in the valley. Young Mansfield watched their departure, then started off on a little excursion of his own, more vexed than he could express that the pleasure of his beautiful day must be so marred by all this "Sunday nonsense." "How Rob can be such a confounded fool, as to be willing to lose such a glorious day as this is more than I can imagine. I do believe it is Cousin Agnes' work."

But in the afternoon he was glad to join his gentle cousin for a walk. One could not be cross nor unhappy in her presence for any length of time; he was soon in a pleasant mood, ready

to enjoy the lovely ramble through the woods. "She is like David with Saul, she charms away the evil spirits," he said to Robert, afterwards.

Agnes had a small covered basket in her hand; she took the path that led to the little hamlet. They sauntered along, the young man stopping often to point out something beautiful or interesting, which his quick, cultivated eye discovered, some peculiar formation of rock, the moss or flowers under their feet, while he told his cousin of natural objects in other lands, so different from those we find in our own, describing them in his vivid, enthusiastic way. Soon they came to a small house on the outskirts of the little village. "Will you come in with me for a few moments, to call on a friend?" asked Agnes.

The young man looked vexed in a moment. "So this is your Sunday afternoon walk; I do not care to make any calls."

"Oh, come! Cousin Henry, come in and see a man who has lain on his back for the past thirty years; come and tell him something new and entertaining; it will brighten his life."

Her winsome smile, even more than her words, mollified him; he followed her into the house,

and into a neat little room, plainly and scantily furnished. A tall woman, in a clean calico dress, gave Miss Spencer a kind welcome, but looked a little aghast at the sight of the strange gentleman. On a bed in the corner of the room, by an open window, lay a young man, or one you would call young, judging from the sweet, refined face, although he was over forty years old. The head, arms and shoulders were well developed, like those of any man, but the limbs under the white spread were small and shrunken, as small as those of a child. A serious illness in childhood had checked their growth, rendering them utterly useless. During all these years, while the mind had expanded and matured, the spirit grown into all that is good and beautiful, the smitten limbs had remained the same, unable to do their appointed work. After long struggles and rebellions against what seemed to be such a hard fate, at last God's sweet peace came to this afflicted one; he took the cup, saying joyfully—"Thy will be done"—then great happiness followed, and quiet rest.

As Agnes Spencer looked into his face that Sunday afternoon, she could hardly believe he

had ever known a trial, the expression was so cheerful, so contented ; a subdued, patient look about the mouth, the sad, pathetic tone of the deep rich voice, were all that told he had ever suffered. On the coverlet lay books and papers, a little vase stood on the window-sill containing some lovely wild flowers. His face was all aglow as Miss Spencer went up to speak to him ; when she introduced Henry Mansfield as "my cousin, an artist, who has just returned from Europe," he put out his thin hand cordially. "I am glad to see you ; I hope you will tell me, sometime, of the many wonderful things you have seen in other lands."

Mansfield returned the greeting rather awkwardly, then retreated to an opposite window in blank amazement, that any man could be cheerful under such circumstances. Yet he did not know that this invalid was obliged to assist in the support of himself and his faithful mother ; friends were very kind, providing him with many comforts, yet with his hand printing-press, and many other devices, he helped to eke out their scanty means, preferring to be independent, as far as possible. Miss Spencer took from her basket some choice roses, some bananas

and oranges that her brother had brought her from the city, also a pretty little book, all in blue—"Bible Forget-me-nots"—that seemed to please him more than all the rest. On the fly-leaf were pencilled the words—"The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee *peace!*" As he read the precious words, his eyes kindled, and a fervent "Oh, thank you, Miss Spencer!" told his appreciation of the invoked blessing.

Then she told him of the morning service, giving him the text and the hymns sung; in connection with one of the hymns she repeated an incident told by the minister. In a fearful storm at sea a vessel was wrecked; many passengers escaped, but one man floated far out on something he had grasped. When all efforts to save him proved unavailing, some one shouted to him—"Trust in Jesus." Then there was wafted back across the waters these words, sung by the perishing man—"Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly." The listeners could understand every word of that first sweet verse, then the music ceased, the waves

closed over him. Jesus received his spirit, he was safe in the haven. Ernest Saunders' eyes filled with tears as Agnes told this story. "O, Miss Spencer, please sing that beautiful hymn," he exclaimed.

Agnes' voice was not strong; she gave her cousin a beseeching look to join her, and without hesitation, he added his rich, full tones. Henry Mansfield knew that hymn; he had heard his mother sing it many times; it carried him back to childhood days; he could see and hear that sainted mother while they were singing. Then, as they finished, a hush fell on the little party. Ernest Saunders' eyes were closed as if in prayer; two hearts at least, in that room, knew that Jesus was present.

A few more words were spoken, then Agnes rose to leave. "These summer days must seem long," she said, kindly.

"Oh, no!" was the smiling reply; "I have plenty to fill up my time; you know, Miss Spencer, I am a member of the 'Shut-in-band;' a kind friend opened that source of pleasure to me; I have many pleasant letters to answer; then this nice, comfortable bed, that the same

kind friend provided, helps to shorten the days as well as the nights."

"I wish you could be out-of-doors, to-day, it is so delightful ; if you only had a carriage and could ride," said Agnes, with a pitiful glance.

"I could not ride, if I had the carriage," he said, a little sadly, "so it is just as well ;" then added, looking up at her with a bright smile, "It is all right—all right."

Henry Mansfield sprang to his feet, and hastened to the bed. "Do you really mean what you say ; do you really think that it is all right ? I say it is *not* right ; it is all wrong."

All the time that young Mansfield had been sitting in that little cottage the thought of his heart had been, "There must be something lacking in this man to accept the situation so tamely, or else his submission is all assumed."

Ernest Saunders looked at him steadily and earnestly. "My God knows what is best for me ; I can trust Him ; I am just as sure that it is all right as I am sure that I see your face."

Mansfield did not reply, but he moved the invalid's bed, and raised him tenderly, so he could look out upon the mountains, and be ready to watch the sunset clouds. "I will come in some

day and tell you of my travels, and show you some of my sketches and photographs," he said, at parting, the sympathy of his heart sounding in his voice.

"And my brother will come too, and bring his flute, so we can have a little concert here, in your room," added Agnes.

CHAPTER II.

As the two left the cottage they carried with them a vision of a very smiling, happy face, bolstered up against the white pillows. Turning their steps homeward, Agnes told her cousin of Ernest Saunders' brave efforts at self-support, how he had cultivated his mind, using every opportunity to improve himself and gain knowledge; how he had grown bright and intelligent, even with his few advantages; and, best of all how cheerfully he bore his trials.

"Why, that fellow is a hero!" exclaimed Mansfield; "more of a hero than the man who courageously faces the guns. All the soldier need to fear is a little pain and instant death; but this poor man is dying by inches. How can he be so patient and happy? So this is the way you spend your Sunday afternoons, is it, Cousin Agnes? This is your Sunday walk. This is a kind of work, I suppose, that you consider it is right to do on Sunday."

Agnes laughed pleasantly. "I do not see

how I could use my afternoons to better advantage; it does me good, and is a comfort to Ernest, I hope."

"Oh! *you* don't need it; you are good enough already; but it must cheer up that poor fellow. I am glad you can go. I take it this is object lesson number two for me on the Sabbath keeping subject. O, Cousin Agnes," he added, in an ironical tone, "I see you are up to your old tricks. If I have many more such lessons I may be converted to your way of thinking. You always had the power of moulding people."

They followed a different path back to the hotel; one which offered many beautiful views. At a point where the prospect was particularly fine Agnes stopped. "This is my usual resting place; shall we sit down for a few moments?"

Mansfield spread a shawl upon the rocks, and Agnes, leaning back against a tree, closed her eyes. Then her cousin noticed, for the first time, how pale and thin her face was. When her eyes were open their brightness illumined her features, hiding their pallor. "Why, Cousin Agnes, are you sick?" he asked.

"Oh no, indeed! only a little tired. I am not very strong in these days."

“How could you be, after all these years of care; mothering all those children; bringing them up in the way they should go? It was enough to crush any ordinary girl.” But he did not refer to the great sorrow of her life that had been the *real* strain upon her health and strength—the sudden death of the noble young man to whom she was engaged. He died just before Henry Mansfield left for Europe. It was not strange that there was a bond of sympathy between Ernest Saunders and Agnes Spencer, for she, too, had learned how to suffer and be strong; how to crucify self, and live for God and for others. She, too, had learned the secret of being glad and happy while carrying a heavy life burden.

The death of her father and mother had nearly broken her girlish heart; then came years of care and anxiety, and then—the sorrow that broke the heart of the woman. Yet her voice was as cheery, her smile as bright as of old; a little more quiet and subdued in manner; still strangers never thought of calling Agnes Spencer “a broken-hearted woman.” Some thought her cold and indifferent; they did not know the secret grief that God knew so well.

She did not care that they should, so she "buried her sorrow." Earnest to do the Master's work, she found much of it to do, and Jesus gave healing and peace. There was *one* errand on which her feet were ever swift to go—to carry comfort to aching hearts; such hearts recognized her at once as their kin; she never went to them without leaving a blessing, so gently did she touch the wounded spot. A broken heart, yet a glad, even a joyful one. What a paradox! "How can it be?" the world asks. This was the thought in Mansfield's mind as he looked pityingly at his cousin. "O brave, true heart, how is it done, I wonder?" It *is* a mystery to those who know not the Saviour; but those who love Him understand that when He giveth *Himself* to a human soul, where a soul opens the door wide for Him to enter, then true peace and joy must come.

Agnes soon felt rested, and began talking brightly of the glorious scene spread out at their feet—the lovely valley, the lake, and the distant mountains. Suddenly Mansfield changed the subject. "I see, Cousin Agnes, that you have taken off the pin that lost its pearl."

"Yes," smiling. "You are as observing as

ever. I do not like things that are not complete."

"And you would not like a week with the Sabbath omitted. What do you find in it that is so delightful? To me it is the most stupid day of all the seven ; I should like to have it left out every time. To be sure, since I have been my own master, I have managed to enjoy myself in some way ; but my boyish recollection of the day is most dreadful. I must say I have a horror of Sundays, and have always had. But you do not feel as I do, Cousin Agnes ; that is evident. What makes the difference ?"

"Now, *my* childish recollections of the day are all pleasant ones. The Sabbath at home was always made the most delightful day of the week. The pictures and Bible stories, the singing, the spirit of joy and gladness that father and mother infused into the day are sweet to recall. I can see mother's bright look now, as she laid away some choice picture or story, saying, 'We will save that for our *best* day.' She and father were always more cheerful on Sunday than on any other day. It was God's day to them ; therefore a day of joy, not to be marred by worries and cares."

“You know very well, Cousin Agnes, that *my* home training was very different; father was so strict and solemn in all his ideas. As long as mother lived, she tried to make it a pleasant time, but I imagine she did it under protest; I really believe she was afraid to tell us a story that was not in the Bible, lest father should not approve. Then, after her death father and Aunt Maria held us children in check, you may be sure; we must not laugh nor talk very loud, while to play a little was an unpardonable sin. Oh! those Sunday afternoons, when we had to sit perfectly still and study our Bibles and catechisms! I pity my poor, miserable little self, every time they come to mind. How every bone in my body used to ache; I can feel it now; how I used to wish I could pitch those books into the fire, and rush out of doors with a shout and a bound. In pleasant weather it was so fearfully tantalizing to sit by the window and hear the birds sing; everything wild with joy outside, and *I* cooped up in the house.”

Agnes laughed. “What a picture! colored a little, I imagine.”

“Not a bit of it; every word is true. Good

Lord deliver me from having to spend any more such days! Then to sit in church every Sabbath morning, and hear a stupid minister preach long sermons that no child could understand; it was just martyrdom; I have had enough ponderous moral instruction of that sort to last me the rest of my mortal days. When I left home I made up my mind to *one* thing—I would spend my Sundays as I chose, and I have. Pray do not be shocked, Cousin Agnes, I have not done anything very bad, nothing worse than your Christians do, who go abroad. They very soon make up their minds to do as the Romans do, I find.”

“Not all of them, I hope; surely some do not forget the sacredness of the Lord’s day?”

“Well, perhaps a few remember, but they are the exceptions. I do not know how things go at home, since the new wife came; I have managed not to be there on that day; I hope, for *her* sake, that father is a little more cheerful. I suppose it would distress him if he knew how little regard I have for the day; but then, I am a reprobate in his eyes, or a fool. ‘The idea that a son of mine should be a painter!’ but he may thank himself for many of my early dis-

agreeable impressions about religious things ; all that aside, however, I cannot see the object of all this 'Sabbath keeping,' so-called."

"Your father is greatly softened of late, I think ; many of his opinions are much modified ; you are constantly remembered in his prayers."

"Very likely I am ; perhaps some day he will be reconciled to 'my silly occupation.' But I have come to the conclusion that the only sensible way to use Sunday, is to spend it just as you would any other day. Rob vexed me so this morning ; he is growing too righteous."

"You believe in the Bible, do you not ?"

"Of course I do ; I am not a heathen nor an infidel ; I believe in my *mother's* Bible, and all its sweet teachings, with all my heart ; my mother is never forgotten."

"Well, in that blessed book is the command, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy !' "

"Yes I know those Old Testament notions, but what is meant by keeping it holy ? people differ."

"God rested from his labors on the seventh day, and He commanded His people to rest ; He gave the whole world a rest. You do not know, Cousin Henry, how many times I have

thanked God for this precious gift; you cannot imagine what it is to have a load of care weighing you down, so you cannot understand the sweetness of the invitation—"Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile." Agnes' eyes were turned toward the distant mountains as she repeated:

"To be alone with God;—this is to rest—
To rest awhile from busy thoughts and cares;
To be rejoicing on His tender breast,
And learn what joy and love and peace are there.
And so I thank the Father-voice that bade me rest awhile,
Where visions of the future make me glad!"

Henry Mansfield regarded his cousin with pity in his eyes, for the tone of buried sorrow sounded through the words; it told her need of God's rest.

"Come, Cousin Henry, we must be going; the shadows are lengthening, do you not see?"

"Yes, I see, and we have been losing all this beauty and glory without convincing one another."

Agnes gave a quiet little laugh. "I will have to call in the services of Dr. Raymond."

"Your new minister, I believe; I demur."

"But you will like Dr. Raymond; and his wife—Aunt Maggie, as our children call her—

(she is a distant relative of father's) everybody likes ; she is fat and jolly ; they are coming up here next week. I do want you to learn to prize and enjoy the Sabbath as much as I do ; I believe you are open to conviction, in spite of your refractory remarks." They chatted along cheerily, as they climbed the rocky path, stopping occasionally to look backwards.

"And that sister and brother of yours, Cousin Agnes, are they not coming this week?"

"Yes, I expect them with Dr. and Mrs. Raymond ; Belle and Tom have been staying with these kind friends since school ended, as our home in the city is closed."

"I want to see them ; they used to be a merry pair : perhaps they are tamed down by this time ; you must have held a steady rein to have kept that team from running away."

"Oh ! they are not very hard to manage," with her quiet smile. "Robert is a great help to me ; they listen to him as they would to their father."

"Good Rob ! he always was a noble fellow ; but I can hardly imagine him playing the part of a father ; hope he will not grow old before his time ; he is getting horribly solemn."

“Not solemn, but a little sobered, perhaps; he has had a great deal of care the past year or two; it has interfered with his progress in art very much; sometimes he has been tempted to give it up, and turn his attention to business.”

“That would be a shame, with his talents; he must not do anything of the kind.” They lingered on the piazza a few moments to watch the changing light on the mountains. “I’m afraid I have lost *my* day; excuse me, Cousin Agnes, that is not a gallant speech to make after my pleasant walk with you, which I certainly have enjoyed. But I have not accomplished what I wished. Rob annoyed me so, that I had no inspiration this morning; you see, I came up here to work. I cannot afford to lose any precious time or have my days spoiled; I feel as choice of them all as you do of your Sundays.”

“Oh! there will come better inspirations, to-morrow; you would not have felt quite easy in mind, if you had attempted much to-day.”

“Cousin Agnes, do not imagine me having any twinges of conscience in this matter; I have done lots of good work on Sunday, some of my best.”

A pained look on Agnes' face made her cousin change the subject. "Oh! look at that hill, with its crown of glory, is it not beautiful?"

The sun had disappeared behind the mountains, the valley beneath lay in deep shadow; but a distant peak was all aflame, glorified by the setting sun, reminding one of many rounded lives, which are the loveliest just at their close. "At evening time it shall be light," because the evening time of a blessed old age is but the prelude to the coming morn—the eternal day. But the beautiful sight flashed into Agnes Spencer's mind the remembrance of her mother's death, the mother who left husband and children while in full health, before age had silvered one hair. During an hour of terrible suffering she could not talk with them; she seemed unconscious of everything but the agony she had to endure. Suddenly the limbs straightened, the hands relaxed their grasp, she grew quiet, while a light from above streamed down upon the pain-distorted face. She opened her eyes wide—"bright with the coming dawn"—and fixed them for an instant upon the dear ones around her bed, eyes beaming with unspeakable love and tenderness, then raised them heavenward,

gazing intently with a look of awe, wonder and rapture, as though she saw things unutterable. No one dared to speak ; the room seemed to be filled with an invisible presence. Did she not look into the spirit land ; did she not see Jesus coming for her ? She lifted her hands, welcoming her Saviour with shining face ; then the arms dropped, the eyes closed ; without a sound the happy soul had fled to its God. The remembrance of that glorified, dying look, brought a sweet brightness to Agnes' face. Henry Mansfield caught the gleam, but it made him feel restless and uncomfortable. "Cousin Agnes has something that I shall never possess," he thought. "I would like a little of her quiet peace ; the day has not been a lost one to her that is certain."

"Did you enjoy your Sunday services, Rob ?" asked Mansfield that evening.

"It was very pleasant ; the sermon was plain and earnest. I was glad to sit by Agnes again, and join with her in the singing. I mean to take my flute another Sunday, and see if I can not help on the music a little ; then I will join their Sunday School, and try to give them an impetus. They are small in numbers and need encouragement."

“What confounded stuff! Are you crazy man? The idea of your wasting your time and talents in that way! You will have to go abroad to get any conception of what your gifts are worth. You have been compelled to lose so much time, and now that you have a few weeks at your command you are willing to fritter them away in this style. Do you pretend to believe that you would be doing more acceptable Sunday work teaching a set of little ignoramuses than you would be in putting some of these magnificent views upon canvas?”

“Helping human souls heavenward is the grandest work conceivable. I would rather be the means of saving *one* immortal soul, made in God’s image, than to paint the most beautiful landscape the eyes ever beheld. Of another thing I am certain—I will never paint another picture if I must do it on God’s day. I grow a little careless about the day when absent from Agnes, but she soon brings me to my senses.”

“Ah! then Cousin Agnes is at the bottom of this Sunday business; I suspected as much.”

“She is not. I have my own opinions, and am ready to defend them. I do not intend to skulk behind a woman, but her sweet example

is an incentive in the right way." Then, in a gentler tone, "But we will not quarrel about this matter; you and I are too good friends for that. Sometimes, during the past year or so, I have been tempted to throw aside my brush altogether, and study for the ministry; but Agnes protests."

"There is where she is sensible."

"She says a good artist is better than a poor minister. She thinks, I suppose, that I paint better than I could preach."

"Well, I am glad Cousin Agnes has kept you from such folly; she is a wise little woman. I have no fault to find with her sweet way of spending Sunday; she is happy in it, and does not attempt to force her opinions upon other people, as I think you are inclined to do."

Robert Spencer smiled at this home thrust. "She is better than I am, and wiser on all occasions. I own up fairly and squarely. She is the very soul of goodness, that little sister of mine—the bravest, most heroic woman the Lord ever made, and the most unselfish." Then the conversation drifted off to other things, Spencer avoiding all controverted points.

CHAPTER III.

ROBERT SPENCER and Henry Mansfield were two very fine looking young men—at least this was the verdict of the ladies at the hotel. But they were not of the frivolous kind. Both were gifted, both had good minds, and strong, manly traits; but young Spencer had learned the true secret of noble living—consecration of soul to the Heavenly King. He was guided by motives and principles which his cousin could not comprehend, for Henry Mansfield, although “a stranger to grace and to God, knew not his danger, felt not his load.” The two cousins were very different in appearance and character. Young Spencer resembled his sister in face and disposition, only his eyes were sharper and blacker, and he had not yet attained that sweet gentleness, which a longer term in Christ’s school, and greater trials, had given to Agnes. He was cool, quiet, but very decided, often showing much youthful arrogance in his expression of his own ideas.

Henry Mansfield, with his light hair and blue eyes, was quick, impulsive, and hasty in spirit, although generous and affectionate ; his decision often took the form of willful stubbornness, so he was always hard to convince. " Massa Henry's powerful sot in his way," was the frequent remark of an old colored man who worked in the Mansfield family. Mrs. Mansfield—the gentle mother—died when Mansfield was young ; the father was a stern man, who did not understand his own boy. Why must this so often be ? But a large property, willed to Henry by a distant relative, left him independent. He soon broke away from the restraints of home, determined to follow his favorite pursuits in spite of his father's unreasonable opposition. His brother and sister soon died, and his father married a second time. Many things in his life had helped to make him hard and cynical ; he was often haughty and imperious in manner, but the remembrance of his mother, and his own natural pride and refinement, had kept him from immorality. He would not stoop to anything low or mean, but restless and unsatisfied was this young life away from its God. Against his father's religion—so

harsh and exacting—his heart rebelled ; that rebellion had ended in a rebound, an utter indifference to God and His claims, that practically amounted to atheism.

Sometimes a recollection of his loved mother's sweet piety aroused his better nature, but it was soon forgotten in the eagerness of ambitious pursuit. He had set himself a high standard in his profession, and to that everything must bend, even God's holy time. One Sabbath, when he was out in the fields busy with his pencil, suddenly there fell upon his ear the solemn tolling of a church bell. Then there came rushing into his mind the remembrance of his mother's death and burial ; he saw it all with the vividness of reality ; he heard her feeble voice saying, " O, Henry, remember now thy Creator." The voice sounded so distinctly that he lifted his eyes to the sky. Then, as he realized for a moment how completely he had shut God out from his heart and life, he bowed his head, overcome by bitter, remorseful feelings. It took him many days to rid himself of sober thoughts.

" I am astonished at Cousin Henry, and disappointed in him," said young Spencer, as he

lingered in Agnes' room that Sabbath evening for a little talk. "His foreign residence may have educated him in art, but he has lost every particle of reverence he ever had for God and His day; he has come home almost a heathen, I am afraid."

"Oh, no! not so bad as that. You must not forget that *you* have grown away from *him*; think of the change that has come to *your* life since you two have been separated. God has the shaft in His quiver which can reach Cousin Henry's heart; we must pray. And, more than that, we must show him the attractive side of religion. You know he has some very bitter prejudices that have strengthened with years."

As Robert looked into his sister's face, he saw there an expression of such calm joy and repose, that he knew Jesus had that day fulfilled His promise—"I will see you again;" in the light of her sweet gaze, all the vexation vanished, that had been rankling in his heart toward his cousin during the day. He went to his room, full of tender pity for the one he loved like a brother, and of earnest desire that Henry too might soon have the God-given hope that cheered his own heart.

Soon all was silent in the hotel; the parlors were deserted, the lights extinguished, but Agnes lay many hours—with her eyes wide open—thinking, hoping, and praying. *Without*, the mountains, lake and valley, were bathed in silver light; a quietness that could almost be felt brooded over all.

“Peace was on the world abroad;
’Twas the holy peace of God—
Symbol of the peace within,
When the spirit rests from sin.”

But many of those in that large building, lying in helpless, unconscious slumber, had never known rest from sin, had never found true peace; many had ended that Sabbath day, even as it had been commenced, without one thankful loving thought of Him, whose day it was; the hours that belonged to the all-glorious One who rose from the dead on Sabbath morning, had been given to the world so completely, that not one had been left for Him. Alas! what would men answer, if God should require of them His Sabbaths, as He did of His ancient people, asking—“Where are thy Sabbaths, thy lost and misspent days?” Even many of His dear children, who love Him, and are trying to

serve Him, would be covered with shame and confusion ; they could only reply—"Dear Lord, we have wasted many of Thy precious days ; forgive us this great sin."

Thoughts like these were in Agnes' mind as she lay wide awake, long after midnight. She felt that she had never before fully realized the true worth of those hours that God has called His own. Again she asked—"How can I make my noble-hearted, but worldly cousin understand their real value?" Then came the reply—"He cannot know, until the crucified, risen Lord reveals *Himself* to his heart." Thus her question ended in fervent prayer, that these blinded eyes might be opened to the light of the Father's love.

In the midst of her thinking, her ear caught the fearful word—"fire." Springing from her bed, and throwing on a wrapper, she opened the door, just as a man came hastening through the hall ; the fire was in one of the rooms in the upper story. In a few moments all was tumult and confusion ; women and children, with pale, frightened faces, came rushing from their rooms in their night clothes, all sense and reason lost in the terror of the moment, ready to throw

their trunks from the windows, and leap after them, or to attempt any other wild freak. Some were crying, and some almost in hysterics; even some strong men lost their self-control, almost as completely as the weaker sex. In all the noise, Mr. Bond—the proprietor of the hotel—appeared in the hall.

Agnes stood with her hand on the door-knob, just hesitating whether it was best to leave her sleeping sister, and go to an invalid friend, in the farther part of the hall, when Mr. Bond hastened up to her, singling her out from the crowd for, as he said afterwards, “she looked like the very image of calmness in a storm.”

“O Miss Spencer,” he exclaimed, “do try to quiet this rabble of crazy women; there is no danger; we have every facility for putting out a fire, and it will be done speedily if these women will not go mad with fright.”

“Some of the men are as nearly crazed.”

“Yes, but I’ll manage *them*, if you will quiet these scared women; I will give timely warning if there is any real danger.”

Agnes looked in upon the little sleeping Grace, then locked the door, and putting the key in her pocket, hurried from one to another,

repeating Mr. Bond's words, allaying fears, by her own calm face and manner, as well as by her reassuring words. As soon as the young artists heard the alarm, they started for Agnes' room, but meeting her in the hall, they rushed to the upper story to assist, where they did good, effective work, for both were strong and brave. Mansfield was fearless—almost reckless, Spencer thought;—he liked the excitement and did not know what timidity meant.

The flames were about extinguished, but one of the rooms was filled with a stifling smoke; a sudden draft closed the door, and fastened the night latch, locking in Henry Mansfield. The key was in somebody's pocket; there was a moment's delay, then Spencer shouted that the door must be broken in for he knew that a short stay in that room would be certain death. The door was forced open as quickly as possible but Henry Mansfield was already almost unconscious; in a few moments more, he would have been smothered. There was a good physician in the house, and Agnes or Robert tended him faithfully through the night.

The next morning he felt weak and half sick, so was willing to lie on the sofa and receive a

little tender petting from Cousin Agnes, who, with her usual unselfishness, concealed her own exhaustion. Heavy clouds darkened the sky; all the brightness and glory of the previous day had disappeared; the beautiful valley, with its lovely lake, was hidden by a thick mist, while the rain was falling steadily. The breakfast was late and poor, for the usual system of the well-kept house was completely disarranged. Every one was tired after the night's excitement; many grumbled and complained, some threatening to pack their trunks and depart from such a dangerous place, but concluded to wait until the rain ceased. A few remembered to thank God most fervently for deliverance from great peril, rejoicing, with grateful hearts, that life, with all its possibilities, was still theirs, kept safely there by a Father's hand.

To her surprise, Agnes found that Cousin Henry was among the thankful ones. He laughed with Robert about the comicalities of the night's experience—the ridiculous manner in which the people threw away their common sense the moment they heard the cry of “fire.” He made light of his own escape, until Robert concluded that his cousin had no idea how great

had been the danger. But when alone with Agnes he spoke soberly. "The doctor tells me that I almost lost my life last night; I suppose it is true. I wonder where I should have been this morning if death had really come. You see, Cousin Agnes, I know that there is a God, and that He is a being of severe justice. 'God is just, and will punish the guilty.' I have heard father say so often. That truth was drilled into me from babyhood, so I cannot forget if I try."

"God is also a kind and loving Father. He kept us safely last night—you and me, Cousin Henry."

He certainly kept me, and I thank Him: but *why* He did so I cannot tell. I imagine that the world would move along without any of my grand paintings; why I am alive to day is certainly more than I can guess."

"I know why, Cousin Henry," with a bright smile; "but you must not talk any more about it now; quiet down, and go to sleep."

It was very pleasant for Henry Mansfield to be tenderly cared for by a gentle woman; he had no remembrance of being watched over by the brooding love of mother or sister; the few

times in his life that he had been sick he had been left to the tender mercies of a hired nurse ; he knew the misery of being harshly treated or neglected when ill and helpless, so he appreciated Cousin Agnes' attentions.

The softness of a woman's touch, the lowness of a woman's voice, are so invaluable in a sick room, so grateful to the suffering one, that every true woman should strive to attain them. The mission of woman is so often to minister in a curtained room, to stand by the bed of pain and death, where every loud noise or rough motion jars on the patient's ear, or sensitive nerve, that she should cultivate this soothing presence that calms and comforts. Some are born true nurses : but all can acquire this art by thoughtfulness and care.

"Cousin Agnes must be a wonderful nurse," said Mansfield to her brother Robert. "Sometimes she has seemed to me too quiet and self-contained ; but this very quietness must be delightful when the head aches and the nerves are all unstrung."

"She is, indeed, a blessed one in the sick room ; you can imagine soon what she has been to us all ; a ministering angel, always sweet

and unruffled in every emergency. No wonder she has learned self-control ; the wonder to me is that she has a spark of life left in her frail body."

For two long days the rain continued to fall, shutting up the inmates of that mountain resort within its walls. No rambles, climbs, or rides could be taken ; no fishing, boating, nor gunning was possible. The ladies could entertain themselves with their sewing and fancy work, and even the gentlemen managed to pass away the hours of the first day with their billiards, papers and cigars ; but when the second day came, and still the torrents poured down, the time hung heavy on their hands. They gathered in groups on the dry corners of the piazzas, watching the clouds, speculating on the prospect of clear weather, or talking politics. There was not the usual excitement of the advent of the stages, with their loads of passengers, for there was no coming or going in such a storm. The arrival of the mail was the only commotion.

By the second morning Henry Mansfield was quite himself, and began to chafe against the "ill luck" that had kept him so long from his work with all the impatience of a child. But

Agnes, always rich in expedients—for had she not learned by long practice?—coaxed to his studio a mite of a colored child, the baby daughter of the cook. The young men had a small room that had been arranged for a studio under Agnes' supervision. When she came into the room, leading by the hand this funny bit of humanity, "Here, I have brought you a little model; now, put her on canvas," Mansfield was delighted.

The little thing was very cute and very pretty, a picture in herself, in a little straw hat, tied down over her ears with bright ribbons, and one of Grace's capes, which Agnes had put on to hide the soiled dress. The little cheeks—fat and dimpled—were of a soft rich brown, the features regular. Under the hat could be seen the curly hair, that hung over the forehead. The large, liquid black eyes turned wonderingly from one to another, showing gleams of the white eye-balls, but without any signs of fear. There was no need of putting her in position. She was already posed, standing there with hands by her side, clutching the flowers that Agnes had given her, without a motion, excepting the rolling of her lustrous eyes.

“You precious little morsel of flesh and blood, you are pretty enough to hang in any gallery!” exclaimed Mansfield, enthusiastically. “I will soon have your picture. Cousin Agnes, you are a jewel to bring me such a sweet little lady.” He was soon at work vigorously.

Spencer, too, commenced a study, while Grace made it her business to amuse the little model, showing her pictures and playthings, and was rewarded for her efforts by an occasional smile that showed the little ivory teeth. Grace and little Irene were great friends; the fair face and the dark one made a pretty contrast.

Agnes saw that her services were no longer needed, so she retreated to her room. She, too, was anxiously watching the clouds, for that was the day of the expected arrival of the Raymond party. Agnes was longing to see them all, especially her brother and sister, from whom she had been separated so many weeks; but she knew they would not appear in such a pouring rain.

As Agnes took up God’s word that morning for her usual reading, her mind turned naturally to the subject of the Sabbath. She commenced searching for Bible reasons why the day of the

Lord should be kept by all as holy, consecrated time, and soon became intensely interested in her work. She was astonished at the number of passages she found relating to the Sabbath, and deeply impressed by the importance everywhere given to the sacred day; not that she discovered any new truths, but, as is ever the case, she made some old truths more entirely her own by her faithful study. If we would have any truth make an abiding impression upon our hearts, we must give it exhaustive thought and attention; indeed, this is the only sure way of making any knowledge part of ourselves.

Why should God's day be sacredly kept, and how should its hours be spent? were the two questions in her mind. But before she had time to arrange and classify her different texts the gong sounded for dinner. To her amazement the morning was gone. Although so dreary without, to her the hours had passed very pleasantly, as they had also to the young artists, judging from the smiling faces they brought to the table.

Agnes felt more assured than ever, from her morning's study, that we cannot have too high

a standard of the manner in which hallowed time is to be spent ; yet she knew God intended the day to be one of gladness, “ a feast day,” in no sense “ a weariness.” She knew by experience, as all do who have the control of children, how hard it is to keep them happy and interested, so interested that they will not be constantly wishing that “ Sunday was over, and play-time had returned.” How to make the day a useful one to the little folks of the household, and yet one that they will love and prize above all the others—their pearl among the seven—is a problem that many parents have solved most unsuccessfully, but one to which others have hardly given a serious, earnest thought.

CHAPTER IV.

THE third morning brought the sunshine to the imprisoned inmates of the hotel. The sun came out in resplendent glory, the rain-drops on the trees—each one a little prism in itself—danced and sparkled in the sunlight; the air was clear and cool; no mist nor fog hid the beautiful valley; just the morning for sight-seeing. If you would see God's world in its perfection, go up to a mountain top after such a storm; you will be amply rewarded for a long, hard climb. In the pure atmosphere the power of vision itself seems to be the only limit to the distance the eye can reach.

The piazza was crowded that fair morning with a happy, admiring company. The views were very fine. There was a new tonic in the air; every face shone with life and joy. After the cloud, sunshine; after tears, smiles; after sorrow, gladness; after a time of darkness we see new beauties in our pathway; our blessings are doubly prized. The storms have clarified

our spiritual atmosphere, driving away the mists.

The young artists were off, soon after breakfast, for a day of work and real enjoyment.

That evening brought the expected ones—Dr. and Mrs. Raymond, Belle and Tom Spencer. Henry Mansfield did not expect to like the minister and his wife; he dreaded their coming, thinking that they would be a damper upon their pleasant party; but Belle and Tom he was very anxious to see. He remembered them as a rollicking pair, who made music and fun wherever they went. But when the Rev. William Raymond, D. D., came bounding up the piazza steps, all young Mansfield's expectations of a solemn, clerical looking man, were happily disappointed. A more genial, kindly face, he had seldom seen. "With dancing eyes, that spoke his pleasure, and a hearty grasp of the hand, he greeted the young artist. "Why, Mr. Mansfield, I used to know your mother very well; am very glad to meet her son."

Henry Mansfield was won at first sight. "What a fine intellectual head and face," was the artist's mental observation. Mrs. Raymond came up more slowly, leaning on Tom's arm.

She had more weight to carry. Her sweet face, motherly ways, and a ripple of merry laughter, were enough to disarm all prejudice in Mansfield's mind, even if she was a minister's wife. The fun and kindliness in her showed itself at the introduction. "Cousin Henry; oh, yes! I know you already by report; I am tempted to kiss you, as I do the rest of my boys, in spite of your height."

Whereupon the young man stooped gallantly for the proffered kiss, saying heartily, "I am as much in need of a mother as any of your boys."

Mrs. Raymond had no boys of her own, excepting the one in heaven; but she had mothered a great many boys and girls too, young people whom she had helped and guided. She had a true mother's great warm heart, as the Spencer children had reason to know.

Mansfield was not long in deciding that Cousin Rob was right, when he called Dr. and Mrs. Raymond "two blessed people." Belle and Tom, Cousin Henry found very much the same, for though Belle tried to be lady-like and womanly—was she not almost eighteen?—yet he could see that she was the same roguish

girl as of yore, in spite of size and years, full of youthful gayety and brightness. Tom, too, had stretched up into a tall, awkward fellow of sixteen ; both acted much like two young colts let loose from long confinement : evidently they had come to the mountains to have a good time.

After supper Mansfield found Belle and Tom promenading on the piazza, with Mrs. Raymond between them ; she was leaning on an arm of each of the young people ; they were all laughing and talking merrily ; evidently Belle and Tom were not very much afraid of this ministerial lady. " This is our little Aunt Maggie," laughed Tom, " little because she is *short* ; she is fair, fat, and forty," giving her arm a pinch.

" Yes, and she is very proud to have such an aspiring—that is, tall—nephew."

One after another joined them, until all the little party were together. " Eight of us in all," said Dr. Raymond, looking around ; " we are a good-sized family in ourselves ; what is to prevent our having a capital time here, among these glorious mountains ? they are more beautiful than ever, it seems to me ; I never tire of these everlasting hills. I hope, Mr. Mansfield, that you are fond of tramping, boating and fish-

ing; Robert and I are agreed in our love of these sports."

"I am ready to join you, often, but I must have part of my time for work."

"Work! work! it is a pity to be obliged to bring work to this retreat; I thought this was the place for resting and recruiting."

Then Mansfield explained to Dr. Raymond what kind of work he was doing. "Aha! Mr. Mansfield, is it that? you could not come to a better region; I can take you to spots where there are charming views, material for pictures—great and small—that must delight the heart of an artist." In the conversation that followed, Dr. Raymond was so interested and enthusiastic that young Mansfield knew instinctively that this formidable minister was a true lover of nature and of art.

That evening, in her sister's room, Belle Spencer made a revelation that astonished and delighted Agnes' heart. "O, Aggie, I hope I am a Christian!" with a trembling voice. "I think Jesus has forgiven my sins, and made me his child. I could not write about it, I was so afraid it was a mistake; indeed, I did not think it *could* be true until I had a long talk with Dr.

Raymond and Aunt Maggie; they encouraged me so much; they knew just how to help me, the dear, good friends."

It was hard for Agnes Spencer to speak to any one of her own religious feelings, but in that glad hour, to this young sister, she opened her heart, hoping by the tale of her own experience—her doubts, fears, mistakes and successes—to comfort and encourage this timid one.

Miss Spencer, the oldest of a large family, with no mother nor father to counsel and guide, had fought many battles in "Doubting Castle," battles all unnecessary, if the heart will only take God at His word, and trust Him with the faith of a little child. Although there had been no human love to help, her Saviour never left her for a moment, but led this dear child through the darkness out into the light, encircling her life at last with a blessedness of trust, a gladness and peace, that are vouchsafed to few. Yet of all this wealth of experience she could not speak, even to her brother or dearest friend; it shone out in face and manner; those nearest her knew that she walked closely with God, for she ever manifested His spirit, but it was never

a subject of conversation. She often wished that she could talk freely of religious things, as others did, but it was not possible.

But that evening, in her great joy, she told Belle many things that never before had she whispered in any human ear. She plead with this dear sister not to admit one doubt, not to go questioning every step, but with simple faith to believe and rest in peace. In her longing to keep this loved one out in the open sea of God's love, safe from the rocks and quicksands against which her own bark had been driven, she lost all reticence, speaking freely and earnestly of her own conflicts and victories. And that evening's talk Belle often recalled; "Never admit the first doubt, for when one gains entrance into the heart, hundreds will follow," said Agnes, and Belle wrote the warning on the fly-leaf of her Bible; many times in after years she had cause to thank Agnes for these words.

The second Sabbath of Henry Mansfield's stay among the mountains dawned bright and clear, but without the wonderful transformation scene, that glorified that first day. The young man was out early on the piazza, as usual, watching for every phase of the sun-rising, for, as he

said, "there were never two exactly alike;" all the variations of cloud and coloring were noted by him with all a lover's enthusiasm, variations that others failed to see. Strange it was that eyes so quick to observe all nature's beauties were so slow to behold *God's* face in the clear mirror of His works! strange, that a heart so enraptured with the beautiful temple—this earthly dome—should fail to do homage to the great Master Builder.

But so it was; with an artist's soul he worshipped and admired, bowing before the beautiful, but utterly forgetting or ignoring the fact that the Lord of heaven and earth—the Maker of it all—claimed and deserved the love and devotion of his whole being. How different was the homage of Agnes Spencer, as she too came out to worship, with eyes that had never been trained to catch all the fine effects, eyes that no amount of training could have taught to see all in nature that her cousin saw; yet, in all this beauty, she beheld that, to which the artist's orbs were blinded—God manifested in His works—and her whole heart went out to Him in glad consecration. A joy filled her breast, of which this cousin, standing near, could hardly

conceive. She had a new cause for rejoicing that Sabbath morning; the thought that her dear sister Belle had a share in that wonderful redemption which the day commemorates; that this young heart had come to a sense of sins forgiven, through a risen Lord and Saviour.

Henry Mansfield talked on gaily, pointing out here and there bits of landscape that would make lovely pictures. Agnes listened in her earnest way, an occasional bright smile showing her interest. At length he exclaimed—

“I mean to make the most of *this* day: I have done so much tramping around with your Minister the last few days, that I have not accomplished much; it has been delightful, he has shown me many charming spots, but I suppose he is too pious to tramp on Sunday, so I shall have the whole day for work. I have been longing to take some sketches from this piazza ever since I came; believe I will commence to-day, if there are not too many occupants.”

An expression of real sorrow came over Agnes' pale intellectual face, as there smote upon her heart a realization of the distance between this spirit and the one over whom she was rejoicing. And could he have forgotten all the

peril to which his life had been exposed one short week before? How sad and strange!

She looked up at him with all her soul in her eyes—

“Only a look of remonstrance,
Sorrowful, gentle and deep,
Only a look!”

yet it touched the young man more acutely than any words could have done, following him all that day, and many days. In an instant his mind reverted to the previous Saturday night, and all her gentle ministries; to his gratitude for escape from threatened danger, his purpose to live for something beside himself. How fleeting these impressions had been; how completely they had been dissipated by other things. Turning to his cousin he said very meekly—“Pardon me Cousin Agnes, I forget how precious this day is to you—your ‘pearl of days’—on this one subject I fear you and I will never agree.”

She accepted his attempt at apology with a kind smile; they were again talking, pleasantly when joined by Dr. Raymond. For this gentleman, Mansfield had already conceived a great liking, finding in him a great deal to respect and admire, with all the genial, lovable qualities that make a pleasant friend. Although there was so

much difference in age, Dr. Raymond was as young in heart, as enthusiastic, as great a lover of nature in all her moods, as Mansfield himself. Notwithstanding the twenty-five years between them, the two men were very congenial companions; already they had spent many pleasant hours together.

Dr. Raymond had traveled extensively in other lands, studying their curiosities, statuary, and paintings with all the love and appreciation of a true artist, so there were between these two, unfailing subjects of common interest for discussion. But the breadth of mind and sympathy—the fealty to God and his fellow men—in Dr. Raymond, the younger man did not begin to comprehend. Henry Mansfield wondered how one with Dr. Raymond's love of the beautiful, could take so much interest in the miserable inhabitants of foreign lands. Everything human seemed to appeal at once to the great heart of Dr. Raymond, even if found in filth and rags; this showed itself in all their conversations, and was a constant source of astonishment to Mansfield.

On the piazza that Sabbath morning Dr. Raymond said several things that rather annoyed the

artist. He told of a little child—tired and poorly clad—that he picked up during one of his rides, placing her on the saddle before him, then winning her confidence by kind questions, until she told him the story of her little life. “He shows as much interest in an ignorant little waif of these mountains, as he would in a beautiful prospect,” thought Mansfield. In Dr. Raymond’s eyes, a human soul was the crowning work of God.

In a pause in the conversation, Dr. Raymond pointed to the church spire in the distance—“We will make quite a company in the little mountain chapel to-day ; you will join us Mansfield, will you not ? ”

For a moment the young man was tempted to accept the invitation so kindly given, then the old spirit of hatred of churches, and of Sabbath restraints asserted itself, and he replied—

“No thank you ! I must be excused ; I have some work I want to do to-day.”

Dr. Raymond gave Agnes an astonished glance ; something in her face kept him from asking further questions. He commenced describing a Sabbath he spent among the Alps ; his account of the religious services of the day—

to which Agnes listened so intently—did not interest Mansfield particularly, but Dr. Raymond's graphic manner of narrating anything, his charming descriptive touches of scenery and surroundings, were always delightful. Mansfield was ever a willing listener, when Dr. Raymond was ready to speak.

After breakfast there was a short, informal service in the parlor, conducted by Dr. Raymond; this he had been in the habit of doing on Sabbath mornings, during the seasons he had frequented this hotel. Mansfield hesitated at the door, but finally followed Robert in, and seated himself by a French window, where he could step out upon the piazza if he chose.

They sang the hymn—"Welcome sweet day of rest;" it sounded very sweetly, even in Mansfield's ears; he was certain that there was *one* present, joining in singing those words of welcome, who sang them with the heart, as well as the lips; he looked at Agnes' sweet restful face, certain that to *her*, at least, it was "rest day." Then Dr. Raymond read the ninety-second Psalm, offered a fervent, impressive prayer, followed by a few interesting remarks on the Psalm

he had read ; with the singing of another hymn the exercises closed.

Henry Mansfield sat and watched the little company ; with most of those present he had formed a slight acquaintance. He noticed the faces of those around, the careless indifferent manner of many, and concluded that to most of them, the Sabbath was no better than any other day. But he had to admit to himself, that those that he liked best in the house, were those who loved the day, and welcomed it with gladness. There was kind Mrs. Raymond—flanked as usual by Belle and Tom—her face shining with pure joy ; Cousin Agnes, with sweet little Grace, and Dinah, the cook—sitting humbly just inside the door, holding on her lap his little model, Irene—her dark features beaming as she sang the joyful words with all her soul. A few others there were, besides their own party, that he had the charity to believe really rejoiced at the coming of the Sabbath, but to many he felt certain, that even this short service was but a weariness.

It cost Mansfield some effort to start off with his white umbrella, and other accoutrements, and stride down the long piazza, directly after

this pleasant little meeting ; some of its sweet peace had reached even his heart, but he had committed himself, and manlike, go he must and would. But he did not carry with him a happy heart ; Cousin Agnes' sorrowful, reproachful look haunted him, while some of Dr. Raymond's earnest words rang in his ears—"While absent from home duties and privileges, we must be watchful lest we fail to keep the sacred day holy to the Lord."

The question would come—"Am I keeping it holy to the Lord?" But he consoled himself by thinking "I will go with Cousin Agnes this afternoon to see that patient man ; she calls that good Sunday occupation." He was soon interested in his work, and went home well pleased with the amount accomplished during the morning.

CHAPTER V.

AT dinner the church-goers looked very bright and happy ; our little party of eight, had a table to themselves. Dr. Raymond and Robert Spencer discussed the Sunday School question, young Spencer asking Dr. Raymond's advice about some plans for its improvement ; both showing great interest in the little chapel and its pastor. Dr. Raymond turned to Mansfield — " We had some good music this morning only we needed your tenor, as Robert played the flute. Our big little girl here," pointing laughingly at Belle, " is developing a good strong voice, she, with Agnes, my *little* wife, and some others, carried along the ladies part very nicely, but the other parts were not so well sustained."

" Well take it altogether, I think we succeeded in drowning out the discords," laughed Mrs. Raymond, " and I hope we made some melody to the Lord, in our hearts. But Mr. Mansfield, I was sorry that we did not have your help ; the harmony was not complete with-

out you; how did it happen that you were not present? I hope you are not sick to-day."

Mansfield colored; Mrs. Raymond's innocent, kindly question, was a little trying. He did not like to shock this true good woman, who had shown so much motherly interest in himself, yet he was never guilty of cowardice, or deceit, so replied politely—"I had something else to do this morning, I went sketching."

"Oh! I am very sorry; my dear young friend, you are making a grave mistake."

The sweet face had such a troubled look, that Mansfield felt really uncomfortable, but he answered lightly—"Oh no! I think not, it was beautiful in woods and fields this morning."

Agnes relieved him by changing the subject of conversation, while Mansfield relapsed into silence, finishing his meal with a clouded brow, thinking some bitter thoughts. "Why should these people treat me as if I had been committing an unpardonable sin? I have as good a right to *my* opinions, as they to *theirs*; *my* ideas are just as likely to be correct as *theirs*. It surely was better for health and happiness, to be out in this air, than to be shut up in a close building, for a couple of hours, bored to death

by a stupid preacher," although he had to admit that the church-goers did not look nor talk as though they had been bored.

He felt very sure that some who went to the chapel that morning, went because they thought they must, and not from choice. One young lady, at another table, whose acquaintance he had formed, called out to him as he was starting off—"I wish I could join you, Mr. Mansfield, for a stroll, but Dr. Raymond will scold, I am afraid, if I do not go to church."

"So that young woman will be one of the worshipers in appearance, but her heart will be out in the woods," he had thought at the time; now, he wondered how much better she was than he, in God's sight. *He* was honest, acting out his convictions, but *she* was only acting a part, yet this same young lady was a member of Dr. Raymond's church.

His mind was so full of angry thoughts, that the pleasant dinner hour was spoiled. But while he was so sure that with many, their apparent devotion was only a form, he knew that Dr. Raymond and his wife, Robert and Agnes, were sincere. He could not conceive of Dr. Raymond, true and noble as he was, as acting a

part, yet he could not imagine what the charm could be that led him to that little church, on such a beautiful morning.

As for Robert, Mansfield had given up talking with him; "He is too set and narrow in his ideas"—was Mansfield's conclusion. Robert Spencer had not his sister's angelic patience; when Mansfield ridiculed sacred things, he would reply sharply. So the young men—old friends, almost brothers—were finding out daily, how far they had drifted apart, until their mutual love for art, seemed to be their only point of agreement. Spencer had not yet learned the secret of differing from a friend, and yet holding him, perhaps winning him, by the power of forbearing affection; a lesson which it often takes years for a strong decided nature to learn.

After dinner Mansfield met Cousin Agnes in the hall—"Are you going to see our Job-like friend this afternoon?"

"No I think not, Cousin Henry; Dr. and Mrs. Raymond are going, but I have another engagement."

"What, pray? I thought nothing ever kept you from your protégé Sunday afternoons."

"I seldom miss that call, but to-day I am

going to a female prayer and missionary meeting; the ladies of the little church hold one this afternoon; they urged my coming, and I promised to attend. I am sorry to miss our call."

"A female prayer meeting! Cousin Agnes, do *you* expect to pray?"

"I may do so, if asked," was the quiet reply.

"You had better take a good rest."

"Yes, I mean to do that at once," and with a bright smile, she slipped away to her room.

In the course of the afternoon, as Mansfield sat on the piazza, chatting with some of the ladies, he saw Agnes and Belle Spencer depart, arm in arm, talking pleasantly.

"She is going to take that chit of a girl with her to a female prayer meeting, I do declare!" was his mental observation; "these people are gone daft on the subject of meetings of all kinds." Soon after, he saw Dr. and Mrs. Raymond, with little Grace, start on their errand of kindness. Grace, although ten years old, was small and slight; she had hold of Dr. Raymond's hand, and went skipping along, talking very fast, as was her custom.

"And Rob, I suppose, is hunting up some Sunday School brat—with Tom in his wake—

all off on their Sunday business," muttered Mansfield to himself; rising in his vexation, he excused himself and started for a walk, perhaps a sketch. This time he had some company, that was not agreeable. Hillard joined him, and was not to be driven away by any indifference or rudeness. "Solitude is delightful, but poor company is misery," Mansfield often said.

At last Hillard made a speech that angered the artist beyond endurance—"I suppose Miss Spencer has gone to visit that sick man, to whom she is so devoted; a very common, humble sort of a person I understand he is. I wonder at her peculiar tastes."

Mansfield felt like collaring the fellow. "What right have you to be criticising the tastes of an angel? If you had a thousandth part of her goodness you might be thankful," and turning on his heel, he leaped a fence, leaving Hillard looking after him in blank amazement. When once sure that he was rid of his troublesome companion, Mansfield slackened his pace, and finally seated himself on a rock, vexed and out of sorts with himself, and the world. At the bottom of his discontent was the martyr feeling that he had been slighted and abused, although in what

way, he could not have told. He would gladly have joined Dr. Raymond and his wife in their walk, had he been invited, although he imagined that the Dr. would talk and pray with the sick man ; he would willingly have been a listener to another earnest prayer, but he could not blame the Dr. for not extending an invitation after the refusal of the morning.

“After all, it is entirely my own fault ; I will not be a fool,” he exclaimed aloud ; “there is plenty to enjoy without company.” Nature—the Soother—soon quieted him. Everything was beautiful beyond description ; the mountains, the clouds, the distant sheen of the lake, while the drowsy sounds of mid-summer, helped to still the unrest of his spirit. He lifted his hat as in reverence—a habit he had—true poet and devotee at the shrine of the beautiful. Soon a rustic fence, made of stumps, and covered with vines, and a clump of lovely trees, attracted his attention ; he took out his pencil, and busied himself until the sun began to hide behind the mountains.

Sauntering on toward home, he bethought himself—“I will make a call on my own account,” and turned his steps towards Ernest

Saunders' humble cottage. Reaching the door, he knocked softly, then entered. Ernest was alone, his bed turned toward the sunset, and looking so radiantly happy, that Mansfield was astonished—"How do you to-day?" extending his hand cordially, to which question the invalid replied—

"Oh! I am well, so well."

"Why, I am glad to hear it; then you are better."

"No, not in body, that can never be, but well in spirit, so happy. Dr. Raymond and his wife, and sweet little Grace have been here; we had the most blessed little meeting, heaven seemed to come right down into this room. Dr. Raymond makes everything so real; sometimes I forget, and heaven seems far away, but it is only a step; as he says, 'if the veil could be lifted from my eyes, I could see Jesus, and the angels, right here in my poor little room.' It is nothing to lie here with *such* company."

"Dr. Raymond has wonderful powers of description; he makes everything vivid, but I imagine several veils would have to be lifted before you could see all that. But I am glad if

it gives you any comfort, you need all you can get."

Ernest Saunders looked at the young man sadly—"You do not love Jesus."

"I neither love Him, nor hate Him; He has not come into my life one way nor another; I have had other things to occupy my time and thoughts. I am coming some day this week, to show you some of the beautiful things that I have seen, during the past two years."

"You are very kind; I shall be glad to see them."

Then the artist opened his little sketch-book, showing some charming bits of landscape.

"How pretty they are, did you do them to-day?"

"Yes, some of them; that little view is not far from your home, but you cannot see it."

"It is a beauty, but I should not think you would want to do it on Sunday."

Mansfield laughed. "Oh! you are shocked too, are you? that seems to be the fashion in these parts; I horrify all my friends. If I never do anything worse than that, I shall be thankful. How do you occupy yourself on Sunday? do you lay aside your press and all your little

devices for passing the time and amusing yourself? It must be a tedious day, if you do."

"A tedious day? oh, no! it is my happiest day in all the week; I have plenty of time to read; then I rest and think, for I am often very tired, even from my little work through the week. Then all my best things come to me on Sunday—my best thoughts, my best friends; Jesus the dearest of all, is especially near, never so near as on the Sabbath day; the hours are all too short."

"Well, if I had to lie on that bed, and do nothing but read and think, for one whole day in every seven, I should soon be a fit subject for a lunatic asylum."

"That is because you do not love the Master; the more we love Him, the more we love and enjoy His day."

"I fear it would always be a stupid day to me, if I had to spend it as you people do—praying, psalm singing, and going to church."

"Going to church is not for me, that is the only shadow that clouds my Sabbath day; that sweet bell says 'come, come,' but I cannot answer the summons; how can *you* resist the invitation; 'Come thirsty one and drink, come

hungry one and eat,' it seems to say; how I long to go every Sabbath morning. But there is great consolation for those who *cannot* go up to God's house, Jesus himself will carry to them the needed food and drink." Then as he saw Mansfield rising to leave—"Oh, please, Mr. Mansfield! sing just one verse of that hymn you sang last Sunday—'Jesus lover of my soul.' We did not have any singing to-day, excepting one of Grace's little Sunday School hymns."

He could not refuse such a simple request, nor resist the pleading of those earnest, pathetic eyes. He sang two verses with true expressiveness; as he sang, there welled through his heart a longing for the rest and peace that breathed through the words—a hiding place, so that he could calmly face danger of every kind, like the man on the wreck. He picked up his book—"I must be going."

Ernest Saunders held out his hand—"I thank you for the music; God bless you, and bring you to this precious Saviour!"

With this earnest benediction sounding in his ears, and a vision of the thin, patient, but happy face before his eyes, Mansfield hastened back to the hotel; he found Dr. Raymond and Robert

sitting on one of the piazzas, enjoying the beauty of the closing day. He rather expected to be called to account by good Dr. Raymond, but was disappointed; the minister's greeting was as genial and cordial as usual. In the conversation that followed, Dr. Raymond found that Mansfield had been to see Ernest Saunders. "I am very glad; hope you will go often, carrying with you pictures, books, or anything that can interest; giving him food for pleasant thought, is befriending him in the truest sense; his mind is active, and needs fresh supplies."

Then Dr. Raymond spoke of making up a little purse to buy Ernest some needed comforts; Mansfield responded at once, and very liberally; the Doctor's heart went out with real affection toward this generous, noble-hearted young man; he was growing daily more and more attached to the gifted young artist. "This soul must be won for God and heaven," he thought, as they sat there in the fading light.

That evening, Dr. Raymond was in one of his best moods, interesting and entertaining a large circle of friends for a couple of hours. His talk was mostly on religious subjects—the religious aspect of many of the countries which

he had visited, interspersed with incidents of travel, and little touches of pathos and humor; whatever he failed to recall in any of his accounts, Mrs. Raymond was ever ready to supplement, especially if it was anything comical, for the comic never slipped from her mind. There was no cant about Dr. Raymond; he spoke of sacred things simply, earnestly, and naturally; he was not a man who thought in ruts—all was fresh and original. He had not *traveled* in ruts, taking only the beaten paths; he had seen many things in his wanderings that many travelers fail to see.

Mansfield was a most attentive listener; nothing could divert him, when Dr. Raymond was talking. He wondered how it was that Dr. Raymond had learned so much about the condition of the people in foreign lands in his months of travel, so much more than he himself had learned, in a sojourn of over two years. To be sure, as the Doctor said—" *You* went for work and study, to perfect yourself in a certain branch; *I* did not; I had no studying to do, unless it was the study of humanity, in all its various phases." Yet this did not account for all the difference. Dr. Raymond loved the human soul, seeing all

its grand possibilities, even when he found it degraded and down-trodden ; his constant thought was—"how can these fallen ones be lifted to their true nobility?"

Mansfield loved the beautiful ; Art was his goddess. What was poor miserable humanity compared with her ? To perfect himself in his profession, so that he might do skillful work for his deity and become famous, were his objects in life ; everything must yield to them. So deep down under all his devotion to a noble calling lay the serpent—Selfishness—coiled up, and so completely hidden, that its presence was not suspected. The idea of using his brush for the elevation of his fellow men ; devoting his natural gift and acquired power to God's service, had never entered his mind.

In all his life, Henry Mansfield had never been intimately acquainted with a man like Dr. Raymond, of large mind and heart, cultivated, refined, and enthusiastic in his love of nature, poetry, and art, yet deeply and earnestly religious—his whole being consecrated to God and his fellow-creatures. How such a man could be willing to use his time and talents for the benefit of the humblest person he might meet, was

an enigma that worldly Henry Mansfield could not solve, yet the very mystery, increased his love and reverence for this good man. Dr. Raymond's piety was very simple—the trusting faith of a little child—but with principles firm and unflinching; yet withal, he was so genial and social, so ready for a joke, so humble in his opinion of himself, so charitable in his judgments of others, that in the five days that they had been together, Mansfield had voted him a rare man, one among a thousand.

CHAPTER VI.

THE following week was one of those perfect ones, that often come among the mountains, the sun rising and setting daily without a cloud; long bright days with an occasional shower during the night, to keep the air cool and fresh. What exhilarating air it was! Oh! the strength these mountains give. The eye brightens, the step grows elastic, we feel equal to any undertaking; climbing the heights grows to be an easy task. Well may we exclaim—"For the strength of the hills we bless Thee!" The sleep is so sound, the appetite so keen; "what makes everything taste so much more delicious *here*, than it ever did at *home*," we ask; "the cream, the milk, the berries, are so much sweeter than they ever were on the plains." The roses come back to faded cheeks, life and strength to weakened limbs, until we begin to think that these mountains peaks, "breathe forth elixir pure."

Agnes Spencer felt the spell, and was daily gaining vitality and vigor; she was often able to join the parties that started off on long tramps, rides, and excursions that required great endurance. Miss Wright—Agnes' invalid friend a little younger than herself did not gain so rapidly, and often felt greatly discouraged; after a long illness Miss Wright had been ordered to the mountains; her physician assured her, that if she would only stay long enough, the tonic of the hills, would surely do its restorative work, so she tried to be hopeful.

Dr. Raymond often spent the day fishing in the sparkling streams that abounded, sometimes accompanied by Robert Spencer, and Mansfield, and always "by the ever-present Tom." The Doctor was a born fisherman; he knew where the finest trout could be found, for had he not investigated every brook and shaded pool, for miles around? they were all familiar to him. His pleasant face had been mirrored in their waters many times, until the tiny occupants knew that when his hook and rod appeared, trouble was sure to follow. If the inmates of the hotel always welcomed Dr. Raymond with delight, it is to be feared that the finny crea-

tures in streamlet and pond, were not so much rejoiced ; his coming was their day of doom.

Henry Mansfield could not deny himself the pleasure of Dr. Raymond's company, even if he had to neglect pencil and brush, but he managed to smuggle a little good faithful work into every day. Sometimes Dr. Raymond would accompany the artists, taking with him a book and Robert's flute ; lying on the grass, or sitting on a rock beside the workers, he would read aloud some fine poem, or play the flute, often breaking out into exclamations of delight over "this glorious world that we live in," and the marvelous power and goodness of the great Designer. Then again they would all join in a song that would start the echoes ; often it would be some grand old hymn led off by Dr. Raymond. Mansfield would sing it as heartily as though such words had not been strangers to his lips for years. Dr. Raymond was so interested in all they did, so eager to understand the principles upon which they worked ; he was so quick to see any peculiarity in the landscape, and made such valuable suggestions, that he was a delightful companion in their expeditions. He was so well acquainted with the country, that he

could tell them where to find the old gnarled trees, the tumbling ruin, or the old gambrel-roofed house or barn.

“Dr. Raymond, if you were not such a good minister, I should say you ought to be an artist,” said Spencer one day.

“No, no, I never could paint a picture; I can see and enjoy the beauty, but I never could put it upon canvas. ‘Many poets die with their songs unsung’ they say, and I presume many artists die with their pictures unpainted; it is probably fortunate for the world, in both cases, that it is saved the infliction,” with a cheery laugh.

The days slipped away rapidly and delightfully to our little party, while the evenings were far from dull. There was generally dancing and card-playing in the large parlor, but a congenial little group often gathered in one of the side rooms, or on the piazza. Belle and Tom were always starting some innocent fun or mischief, while Mrs. Raymond was ever ready to second their movements, or to read or recite something funny, in her inimitable way, that would convulse the company with laughter. She was always the life of the meals, bubbling over with

fun, as she was ; Belle, Tom, and often her husband, acting as assistants.

“Dyspepsia might have made me his victim before this time, but for my jolly wife,” Dr. Raymond often said ; “she always makes it a point, to spice her meals with merriment.”

“Yes, this good husband of mine is often sadly in need of just such spice,” laughed the wife.

This pleasant family life was delightful to Henry Mansfield — something new to him, he had been leading such a roving unsettled life for so long ; indeed he had few recollections of merry social times around the family board. After the death of his mother, the austerity of his father and aunt had destroyed all the freedom and joyfulness that belong to the true home.

The gatherings around the tea-table, after a long day of enjoyment, were always merry ones. Some one of the party always had some experience to relate, some funny adventure in the day's happenings. Tom was always bringing in something of the kind—the funny things he was sure to find, or to concoct.

One evening at table, they were speaking of

quarrels. "Some one spilled the salt, and then laughed about the sign.

"You and Dr. Raymond never had a quarrel in all your lives, did you, Aunt Maggie?" asked Belle.

"Oh, yes indeed! we have had a great many."

"Why Aunt Maggie! do tell us all about it, what did you quarrel over?"

"My dear, I should not like to speak of family difficulties before so many; it would be very trying;" her voice was so doleful, her face so sober, that even Dr. Raymond looked aghast.

"Oh! Aunt Maggie, you will have to tell us now, or we shall think it is something dreadful."

"Well, my child," very solemnly "we have had a great many quarrels about cheese; we never could agree on the subject of *cheese*;" she brought out the last word so comically, that they all laughed heartily, Dr. Raymond loudest of all.

"Yes, I can truly say, that is about the extent of our quarreling."

"Happy man! May I be as fortunate!" laughed Mansfield.

During these days of pleasure, Agnes Spencer did not lose sight of her purpose of finding

sound Bible answers to the questions—Why the Sabbath day should be observed, and how its sacred hours should be spent. As she belonged to Mrs. Raymond's Bible class at home, she turned naturally to her pastor's wife for help in this examination; the two ladies had many pleasant talks on this subject. To Agnes the Sabbath was precious—her comfort, and delight. As a child she had been taught to look upon the day as hallowed, and also as joyful time—a day of “rest and gladness.” As she grew in years, and heavenly grace, as her life was more and more crowded with care, the higher was the estimate she put upon her day of days. She anticipated its coming through all the duties of the week, prizing it as the time when she could drop the things of earth, and in God's house, could look up into the brightness of the Father's face, catching a glimpse of the heavenly courts, in that land where all is light and joy. The Sabbath was her resting place by the way, her oasis in the desert—watered by springs, and covered with verdure—where she gained new strength for the onward journey. “Sunday is coming” was the thought that often cheered her, when tired and discouraged.

It had been her effort to teach her brothers and sisters the same high estimate of this holy day ; at the same time, she had striven to redeem the hours from all thought of weariness and restraint. Feeling as she did, it was not strange that it grieved her to the heart, to find that Cousin Henry thought so differently, having such utter disregard for the day and its claims. Agnes had always taken it for granted that the day was the Lord's ; she could hardly imagine how any one could look upon it in any other light. She was too wise to argue with her cousin, but she hoped to influence him in quiet ways ; she wished to be able to answer some of his objections.

One lovely morning Mrs. Raymond and Agnes were sitting by an open window, with the beautiful sweep of mountain and valley spread out before their eyes. Suddenly Agnes gave the conversation a serious turn by asking earnestly—

“Mrs. Raymond, if the question were put to you—‘Why is every one bound to sanctify the Sabbath day?’ what would you reply?”

“Why, of course, Agnes, the first and great reason is—God's positive command, as given us

in the fourth commandment, where He claims 'one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself.' When God came to His ancient people with thunderings and lightnings, the noise of trumpets, and the smoking of the mountain, He spoke the solemn words—'Thou shalt keep it holy—thou shalt not do any work,—nor thy children, thy servants, nor thy cattle.' Surely there can be no greater reason for obedience than such a command, thus given, and enforced."

Agnes opened her Bible to Deuteronomy ; " 'Keep the Sabbath to sanctify it,' Moses said, as he rehearsed the law in the ears of the people, just before his death. How he recalls the scene, 'When I stood between the Lord and you, for you were afraid by reason of the fire,' do you not think his heart must have been sad as he reviewed the way the Lord had led them, knowing all the time that he could never enter the promised land? "

"Not *sad* exactly, I think, Agnes ; he was perfectly submissive to God's will ; then he must have known that there were better things in store for him than even the beautiful land of his affection. Can you turn to any other pas-

sages where the command is repeated? You seem to be prepared to answer your own questions?"

Then Agnes read from Leviticus—"Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary, I am the Lord;" and from Ezekiel—"Hallow my Sabbaths."

"How often we find that word 'hallow,' used in connection with the Sabbath," remarked Mrs. Raymond. "'Hallow my Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you;' it is the symbol God's children carry, that they are His."

"Surely the command was very explicit. And now, dear Mrs. Raymond, *why* was such a command given in those early times? There was no resurrection to be commemorated."

"I see you are all interrogation points—the why, and the wherefore? I suppose it was because God knew that a day of rest was absolutely necessary for the life and health of man and beast. A seventh part of the time was for rest, and not only rest, but a 'holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord;' the seventh year was a Sabbatical year, the land was to rest; there was to be no sowing nor reaping, no gathering

in ; the spontaneous growth of the land was to be left for the poor."

"Oh ! I think it was wonderful, beautiful, that even the land should have its rest, and the poor their harvest," exclaimed Agnes.

"Indeed it was ; it would often be a blessed thing now for mother earth, and her poverty-stricken children, if that law were still obeyed. Well, the Sabbath of the world will surely come sometime, not *one* year, but a thousand. What years of peace and blessedness those millennial years will be !" and Mrs. Raymond's eyes turned longingly to the lovely valley that lay smiling in the morning sun.

"But why was it necessary for God's ancient people to observe so many more rest days than we do in these latter times ? They were certainly a longer lived, and stronger race than we are ?"

"It was not that they needed so much rest, but you know they had no conception of consecrating, devoting anything to a holy God. They had to be taught as we teach little children—line upon line—that a seventh part of their time was sacred to the Lord. We can hardly conceive how hard it was to make them under-

stand this truth, perhaps the missionaries can imagine. For God's purpose was not only to give them bodily rest, but to teach them to bow in worship and adoration before their Lord and Maker."

"Even now, we as Christians have not fully learned the lesson, for do we not often cheat our *souls* out of the Sabbath rest which they so much require?"

"Why, Agnes dear, do not imagine for a moment, that I undervalue the real object of the day because I have said so much about *physical* rest; the Sabbath is the spirit's day."

"Oh! I do not; only my thoughts wandered off to the way we often let our cankering worries and cares spoil our Sabbaths. God says — 'My people shall dwell in quiet resting places;' surely the Sabbath should be such a place. Is it not just as wrong to burden our heart with sorrows and anxieties on that blessed day, as to fill them with worldly plans? Should we not be care-free for one day in the seven?"

"Yes, Agnes, you are right," said Mrs. Raymond, smiling, "but it is often hard to shut out these intruders on joyful time. It is George

Herbert, I think, who calls Sundays, 'care's balm and bay.'

"I know, when I was a girl, if anything sad or annoying happened in our school or family matters, mother would often say to us: 'Do not think nor talk of it to-day, leave it until Monday, nothing must mar our Sabbath day.'"

"Your mother was a wise woman, she must have been a very happy Christian."

"I have thanked her many times for teaching me to keep troublesome things out of holy time; sometimes in the sad past, I fear reason might have fled, but for these resting places of spirit."

"You dear child! I am glad that you have learned the true meaning of Sabbath rest. After a day spent in thinking of Christ, his tenderness and love, all he did and suffered for us, by Monday morning, how insignificant seems our own sorrow; the burden is not half so heavy as when we laid it down Saturday night."

"No, not half," said Agnes with a smile, "and the strength and refreshment of that precious day, last through all the week."

"It will be a blessed thing for us, when we can make all our days Sabbath days in this respect, leaving every load for the Lord to carry."

“Do you think we shall ever reach that point in this world?”

“Some have, Agnes; I think it is possible.”

Just then Belle opened the door and exclaimed —“Why here you are, Aunt Maggie; I could not find you. Dr. Raymond wants to know if you and Aggie feel like taking a long ride, to a lovely mountain peak, where there is a very fine view; he thinks it is a splendid day to go.” The ladies were both ready to join the excursion.

“Why, it is too bad for you two to be cooped up here this charming morning; pray what have you been doing?”

“Having a pleasant little chat, mostly about the Sabbath,” replied Mrs. Raymond.

“Wish I had been here to listen; Sundays are our most pleasant days at home, are they not, Aggie?”

“Yes, I think they are, Belle,” with a bright smile.

“But at school we girls grow careless, and often break the Sabbath, I fear. Now you two will have to hurry and get yourselves ready, while I hunt up Grace.”

CHAPTER VII.

It was a merry party that was stowed away in that large mountain wagon that day, eight in all, beside the driver, to say nothing of lunch baskets, and wraps, for as Tom said—"This is to be an all day affair; we are not coming home until dark." It required the services of two gentlemen to get Aunt Maggie safely mounted into the high vehicle. "The feat is accomplished," she exclaimed, as she seated herself, puffing and laughing.

"Now we must have a comfortable place for Aggie; she's not *strong*, but she's *precious*," was Tom's aside to Cousin Henry. Tom was the moving spirit; he enjoyed the fun of getting started, as much as any part. Mansfield hesitated about going, although sorely tempted, but Dr. Raymond's—"O, Mansfield, *go*; you will get your best impression of the beauty of this region from this peak"—turned the scale, and he gave himself up to the pleasure of the day. Tom, who had been several weeks among

these hills with Dr. Raymond the previous summer, had to add his testimony—

“Why this that you see here is nothing—just these mountains, and this valley; if you want to get a view that *is* something, you must go to this tip-top place; you can see all over creation; if you try to paint *that*, you’ll have to take a canvas as big as the side of a house.”

“Well, young man, you need not warn me, I shall not attempt anything of the kind,” laughed Mansfield.

Oh! the charm and delight of such an excursion among the mountains. The air was clear and bracing, the horses strong and fleet, the company well acquainted and congenial. The sky was as blue as sapphire, with a few fleecy clouds floating in the azure depths, and casting lovely little shadows upon the mountain-sides. “The day is perfect, and everything complete,” was the verdict of the happy party. They descended the steep road into the valley beneath, then taking a sudden turn, commenced going “upper and upper,” as Tom declared, until the way grew rough and stony, and the horses had to stop occasionally, for a little breathing-spell.

The ride was long, but far from tedious, with

so many wide awake spirits in the load ; so many eyes watching for everything interesting or beautiful ; so many ears and hearts attuned to Nature's sweet sounds, and ready to enjoy all her pleasant things. At length the driver drew rein in a shady spot, informing the company that the horses could go no farther, the remainder of the ascent must be performed on foot. There was more fun in dismounting, and the usual delay and discussion about the place to lunch ; but the gentlemen agreed that they would rather carry the baskets the rest of the distance, than to spend any unnecessary time away from the upper glories. Tom remembered that there was a sheltered spot, where they could take their meal, "only we may have to pin down the table-cloth, it blows hurricanes up there on top sometimes ; you ladies better take all your wraps, and furl all you sails, or you'll be carried up."

"Not much danger for *me*, Tom, I am of the ponderous kind, which does not blow away."

"It *would* take a good strong gust to carry you off, Aunt Maggie ; but, Aggie, a whiff might blow her away ; I'll hold on tight," grasping his sister's arm laughingly.

“Now do not look back until you reach the summit,” was Dr. Raymond’s advice, “so that the whole scene may burst upon you in all its grandeur.”

The climb was a long, hard one, but they had strong walking sticks that Tom had cut, and occasionally the gentlemen had to put down their baskets, to help the ladies over the rough places. Several times Mrs. Raymond gave out entirely, and declared she could go no farther, but her husband’s strong arm gave her new courage.

At last the top was gained, and all turned to gaze with wonder and admiration upon the magnificent picture spread out before them. Even Tom and chatterbox Grace, were awed into silence. As far as the eye could reach, in almost every direction, was a sweep of beautiful country—hills and plains, valleys and little lakes, all seeming far beneath them, so much did this bald-headed peak tower above all its fellows. In the dim distance a river went winding along, looking like a shining ribbon in the landscape, while the far-away mountains were blue as “the overhanging heavens.” For a few moments they all stood enraptured, spell-bound, Dr. Raymond and Mansfield holding their hats in their hands.

until Mansfield's delighted exclamation broke the silence—"Oh! this is most glorious. I never saw anything equal to this in any country."

And then another voice was heard—the good wife's anxious tones—"Dr. Raymond, do please to put on that hat."

He obeyed mechanically, and turning to Mansfield said most earnestly—"I feel like bowing in reverence and adoration before the God who formed this glorious world." The tone and manner showed that the words came from the depths of his heart; then he repeated—

"Our heights which laud Him sink abased before
Him, higher than the highest evermore:
God higher than the highest we adore!"

Mansfield knew what this worshipful feeling was, but his homage was all for the work, and not for the Creator; turning to Agnes he asked in an undertone—"Do you see God in it all?" her speaking eyes made answer, as well as her earnest—"I do indeed."

"Well, you and Dr. Raymond see more in it than I do; it is magnificent, but I had not thought of God." The contrast oppressed his heart.

Dr. Raymond, overhearing the remark, quoted

these words from a heathen writer—" 'God is within thee and is thy God; thou carriest God about with thee, and knowest Him not!' When you come to know and love Him, Mansfield, you will see Him in His works."

Dr. Raymond was in one of his eloquent moods that day, and all were glad to listen. He referred to the Jewish legend, that Moses when on the mount with God, needed no food, but as soon as he descended, must have earthly nourishment. "Moses—grand old prophet—must have loved the mountains; there alone with his God, the glory and majesty of the Unseen One were revealed to him; there his mortal eyes were allowed a glimpse of the heavenly vision. Upon those heights he talked with his God. And at the last, from a mountain top, he went up to that promised land, whose boundaries he was not forbidden to enter. The mountains ever seem very near to God and heaven; if we would scale their steeps oftener, rising above the clouds and mists of earth—its turmoils, sins, and sorrows—to be alone with God, how much stronger and better rounded our Christian lives would be. When we have just descended from such altitudes, *then* are we fitted for the battle of life."

Mansfield listened with a sad heart, realizing how far *he* was from God and heaven. Many times, during the days they had been together, had Dr. Raymond spoken earnest, impressive words like these, which seemed to burst from his lips spontaneously, called forth by some lovely scene. God was in all his thoughts. He heard His voice, and saw His face in all the sweet music, and the beautiful sights of the summer time.

Grace, who had never been so high before in all her life, was awed by Dr. Raymond's words. She caught hold of Agnes' dress, and hid her face as if afraid, whispering—"Are we almost to heaven, Agnes; does Dr. Raymond mean that we are going up as Moses did?"

She comforted the child, but heaven did indeed seem very near to Agnes; its reflected light was on her face. The child's question thrilled her heart. For a moment she wished that she might go—as the old prophet did—translated to those "happier hills, and meadows low," where her beloved ones were dwelling; but she looked into the little sister's pleading eyes, and was rebuked for the selfish thought.

After the first delight and wonder had sub-

sided a little, Robert Spencer produced a large field glass, and Dr. Raymond pointed out the different localities, calling attention to many things that their unfamiliar eyes had not discovered. The high hill—mountain they called it when they were in the valley—on which stood their hotel, looked very small from this height.

“It’s not of much account,” said Tom contemptuously.

“But we must not despise it,” remarked Mansfield, “we get beautiful views from those piazzas, especially of the sunrise; you get up once Tom, in time to see *that* marvel, and you will not speak so disparagingly of the hill.”

They wandered around from one side to the other, finding new beauties at every turn, never tiring of the splended picture, without any thought of hunger or weariness, until Mrs. Raymond declared that it was time to rest, and have some dinner. The wind was beginning to blow, and they concluded to seek the sheltered retreat, protected by boulders, which Tom had already discovered. Dr. Raymond and Robert were so busy examining the rock formations, that Mansfield and Tom had to give the ladies the help needed, proving themselves expert assistants.

The cloth was spread on a smooth rock, and fastened down securely by Tom, while Mansfield provided some comfortable places for Mrs. Raymond and Agnes to sit, insisting upon their resting, while Belle and Grace explored baskets, and arranged the viands in as good style as circumstances would allow. Then Dr. Raymond, in a few beautiful words, thanked the Heavenly Father for this feast on the mountaintop, for soul and body. Soon all found that they were ravenously hungry; with fun, merriment, and pleasant chat, a hearty meal was eaten.

As they rose from their dinner, they noticed that the sun was clouded in, while the chilly wind felt like rain; the gentlemen hastened from their retreat to investigate. In a few moments the sun was shining again, all was lovely and clear, but just beneath their feet, were heavy dark clouds, from which the rain was pouring upon the lower world. They could see the lightning flashing, and hear the roar of the thunder, as it broke against the mountain side, but they were above the storm; in that higher atmosphere the wind had lulled, all was calm and serene. It was a splendid sight.

“This completes the perfections of this per-

fect day ; what more can we ask ? ” exclaimed Mansfield, in his usual enthusiastic way.

“ And now, Doctor, ” said Mrs. Raymond, “ we have a vivid illustration of the truth you were giving us this morning ; above the clouds there is calm and peace ; if we can only climb high enough, we are safe from the tempests of earth. ” To which he replied with a nod and a smile, and then exclaimed—

“ Ah ! why can we not live above the clouds ever and alway, we who call ourselves the sons and daughters of the most high God ? In ‘ the high mountain apart ’ with God, the storms could not reach us, storms that would beat upon us furiously were we walking upon a lower plane. ”

After a time the thunder and lightning ceased ; the summer shower was ended, but our little party could never forget the scene. It was past the time set for their departure, yet they lingered, unwilling to leave this grand old mountain, with its glorious outlook ; they watched the changing clouds, noting the varied colors, and seeing new beauties with every change. Belle and Tom started off on an exploring tour, looking for ferns, flowers, or some little souvenir of the happy day, to carry

home; they returned with only a few curious stones, and pieces of rock. "It's the most barren of all barren places," Tom declared.

"Perhaps a lower altitude, and more showers, are more favorable to growth, than this height," remarked Mrs. Raymond giving her husband a mischievous glance. The Doctor shook his finger at her warningly—"Don't you pull my theories to pieces. But now we must go down into the valley, carrying with us as much of heaven as we can."

"All take a farewell look, and stow it away in a safe place!" shouted Tom, gathering up the wraps.

"Is this the same hard way we climbed this morning?" asked Robert Spencer, as the gentlemen, with lightened baskets, escorted the ladies down the stony path.

"It's easier going down than up I guess," remarked Tom sagely.

"That is a fact, Tom, you just remember it, and never start on a down hill course in life; it is hard stopping."

"Have to go down hill sometimes to look for other folks; always somebody in the gutter, brother preacher, don't you know that?"

“Raise them up if you can, and start them in the right way, but do not let them drag you down to their level.”

They found driver and horses well rested, and eager to be moving. A charming ride home, in the cool of the twilight, completed the delights of this delightful day; the valley was very fresh and lovely after the shower; the whole party slept soundly and sweetly that night, after so many hours spent in the open air.

Agnes Spencer dreamed of a beautiful country of limitless expanse; above it the over-arching sky, with fleecy, floating clouds; in the clouds she could see the faces of beloved ones—who had crossed the river—and among them, the radiant form of one, who she knew must be Christ the Lord. Then she awoke rejoicing that these dear ones, “who had passed away into the shadow and were gone,” had only gone to be with Jesus. A twinkling star looked in at the window whispering—“‘Above the stars there is rest;’” “rest and joy eternal,” she thought, as her eyes closed again in peaceful slumber.

“Will you not go with us to church this morning, Mansfield?” asked Dr. Raymond, the

following Sabbath, as he waited on the piazza for his wife to appear.

The young artist colored a little, hesitated, and then replied rather coolly—"No, thank you, I believe not; I have other ways of spending my time."

"But why not spend it in this way for once?" persisted Dr. Raymond pleasantly.

"My Sundays are my own, I spend them as I choose," with a touch of defiance in look and manner.

"They are *not* your own; they belong to your Maker;" then laying his hand kindly on the young man's shoulder, said persuasively—"Come now, Mansfield, go with us to-day; why will you persist in putting yourself out of the reach of heavenly influences; why not listen if you may not hear the voice of your mother's God?"

Mansfield was touched. Springing to his feet he exclaimed impulsively—"Dr. Raymond, I will go with you this morning."

In a few moments the party was ready to start. Mansfield walked down with Agnes and her brother Robert,—Agnes, in her sheer white dress, "looking like a saint," as Cousin Henry

thought. "Why should she not wear white here on earth. She is so pure and good, she will surely be robed in it through all eternity."

Robert could hardly conceal his pleasure at having his cousin's company. "Going to hear Dr. Raymond preach this morning?" he asked.

"Is Dr. Raymond to do the sermonizing to-day? then he is going to preach at me I'll be bound; that accounts for his being so anxious to have me go," and Mansfield was ready to beat a retreat, but Agnes interposed.

"You need not think that Dr. Raymond will preach *at* you, Cousin Henry, that is not his way; if he had anything to say to you, he would say it personally, in all frankness and love."

And thus it happened that Henry Mansfield found himself in a little country church—the first time in many years—joining in the opening hymn with all his heart, for just in front of him sat Belle; her young voice, so strong, clear, and sweet, was an inspiration. He found he was greatly mistaken in imagining Dr. Raymond's sermon would be aimed at him. It was for the sorrowing, afflicted ones, of whom there were many in the little community, for the world is full of trouble; thorn-pierced hearts are to be

found in the most secluded hamlets. For them, that morning Dr. Raymond had sweet, tender words of balm, and consolation, such as he knew so well how to speak. For some reason, Mansfield could not keep his mother from his mind; he seemed to be standing by her dying bed; something in the sermon drew his thoughts back to that early loss and sorrow. When the service closed, some of the Sabbath peace, infused into all the exercises, had stolen into his heart.

"I am glad I went," he said to Agnes, on their way home; "it was all very pleasant."

"I am glad, too, Cousin Henry; now go with us this afternoon, just before sundown; we are all going to Ernest's room to have a little meeting—mostly singing, I presume."

"I should like to join you very much."

And he went with the little company to the evening gathering, and found it delightful; how anything religious could be made so pleasant, he could hardly imagine. It was all so free and informal—several hymns were sung; a grand old psalm read most impressively; a few words of hope and cheer spoken that raised the soul above all things earthly, to the very gate of

heaven; and two short prayers offered, one by Dr. Raymond, and a very earnest one by Robert Spencer. Mansfield had never heard his cousin pray; it almost startled him, to hear his boyhood's friend and companion, praying to the God of heaven.

"Peace with God" seemed to be the very spirit of all these services. "I wish I too was at peace with Him!" was the secret cry of Mansfield's heart. The music in which all joined was very sweet—to Ernest Saunders' ears at least, as he lay on his couch listening, his face the very picture of quiet joy. Sometimes his lips moved, singing softly for a few lines. Mansfield watched him closely, and could see what a comfort all these exercises were to him.

"Faith in a God, and a heaven to come, must be a blessed thing for this poor fellow," he thought, "whatever it may be for well, strong people." But how Ernest Saunders, with his heavy cross to bear for a life time, could think that God was "good and loving," was more than Mansfield could imagine.

Yet the afflicted one *did* think that his Heavenly Father was "good and loving;" the peace and joy in his heart that Sabbath evening were

something the worldling might envy, "a peace that passeth understanding." Many a one who is "like the troubled sea which cannot rest," might vainly have offered treasure for *one* such hour of quiet rest and joy. It is something that cannot be purchased—the free gift of God, through Christ, to the trustful soul.

"Dr. Raymond, can't we sing 'Sweet By and By?' I like that, and so does Ernest," Grace asked; so they sang—"There's a land that is fairer than day," with the refrain—"We shall meet on that beautiful shore."

"Yes, every one of us I trust, on the beautiful, heavenly shore!" exclaimed Dr. Raymond as they finished singing. Mrs. Raymond asked the closing hymn might be her favorite—"Softly now the light of day." "The daylight fades, the night of death comes on, but it is only the night that precedes the glorious day," were Dr. Raymond's last words. They lingered in Mansfield's ears; God's spirit was whispering to his heart—"Come unto Me." After a touching benediction—"Peace be unto you!" pleasant good nights were spoken; they went out into the twilight, a hushed but happy company; even Tom's merry face looking sober and earnest.

As usual Mansfield walked home with Cousin Agnes, Grace joining them.

“Was it not a pleasant service?” asked Agnes.

“It was indeed ; it’s the first really enjoyable Sunday I have spent, since I came to the mountains,” adding by way of explanation—“You people have a most provoking way of making a fellow feel uncomfortable, if he stays away from church.”

“I am very sorry if we made you uncomfortable, but was it not more that you missed something ; were you not looking for something you had lost, and needed to find ?” with a pleasant smile.

Mansfield smiled too at the reply ; “But you must not imagine that I am convinced that there is anything sinful in my doing a little honest work on Sunday ; I believe it is just as acceptable to God as church-going ; I can serve Him in the fields, better than some do in their churches. I saw a lady there to-day, whose thoughts, I am sure, were more on her dress, than on sermon, or prayer. If I *thought* it was a sin to do a little sketching on Sunday, then perhaps it might be, and contrariwise, is not that the doctrine ?”

"Oh, you must ask Dr. Raymond that question, I am not skilled in argument," laughed Agnes. Just then Grace caught his hand—

"Come this way, Cousin Henry, and see my little beauty." She led him from the beaten path a short distance, through tangled underbrush, and showed him a sparkling little spring all surrounded by moss, in a safe hiding place. "This is mine, I found it; no one knows about it but Agnes and me; don't you call that a beauty? It bubbles right out of the rock, and then sends out this cunning little stream; the water is just as soft and sweet, I dip it up with my hands and drink," suiting the action to the word. "It's just lovely in here when the sun shines; now I've told *you*, and you can come here sometimes, but don't you tell Dr. Raymond and Tom, for they'd be trying to find some fish; I'm not going to have it riled up that way. Agnes says this little spring is just like my heart; if I keep my heart sweet, the streams will all be sweet and good."

"That sounds just like Cousin Agnes, and that's her pleasant voice now calling us; we must hasten on," taking the little hand in his, and helping the child back to the path.

"How about my own heart?" thought Mansfield, as he walked homeward in a quiet mood; "sometimes I fear it is all wrong in God's sight."

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT evening as some of our little party were sitting in one of the small parlors, Mansfield suddenly broke in upon the conversation with the interrogation—"Dr. Raymond, do you consider it a heinous sin for me to go out on Sunday, and do a little sketching or painting, catching some of Nature's beauty?"

Agnes' heart beat fast, as she listened for Dr. Raymond's answer. It came very promptly, almost sternly—"I think it is a sin, most decidedly."

Mansfield was hardly prepared for this reply. Dr. Raymond was so liberal and charitable in all his judgments, that Mansfield did not expect this wholesale condemnation; he was on the defensive in a moment.

"I think you are a little harsh, Dr. Raymond; how can you judge for me in such a matter? It may seem a sin to *you*, but it does not to *me*; I must be the one to decide what is right or wrong for myself."

"You asked my opinion, Mansfield, and I gave it, without intending to be harsh. But I am glad you asked the question, for there are many who feel as you do, and I think they make a serious mistake. Suppose we talk this matter over frankly."

"Now, Doctor, don't get so interested in your pet subject, as to tire these good friends all out," interrupted Mrs. Raymond, a little mischievously.

"My wife is on the alert, you see, ready to give me a limit when I monopolize too much of the conversation," laughed Dr. Raymond.

By this time Mansfield's vexation was all gone, and he was ready to listen to what Dr. Raymond had to say.

"I remember the time, Mansfield, when I thought just as you do. I was brought up so strictly, had been so excessively restrained on the Sabbath, that when I left home for school and college, I was ready to rebound to the other extreme. I was ambitious to make the most of my time, so decided that it was right for me to study on Sunday; that for me it was a better use of the day, than going to hear uninteresting preachers who did me no good intellectually, so I absented myself from church, as much as possible."

“There’s my case exactly ; sermons bore me to death, do me no good—excuse me, Dr. Raymond’s excepted—; I can use the hours to better advantage. Is not faithful, honest work, done with painstaking, thoroughness and care, service for God ; and is not such work just as acceptable on Sunday as on any other day ? ”

“There are too many questions at once,” laughed Mrs. Raymond, “one at a time if you please, sir.”

“Yes indeed, honest work is service for God. The humblest, most ignoble drudgery, if done in a spirit of consecration, becomes transmuted, elevated, and ennobled,

‘When Thou bendest hither Thy hallowing eye,
My narrow work room seems best and high !’

You have heard of the old heathen artist, working carefully on the *back* of a statue which was to stand against the wall of an idol temple ; when asked why he took so much pains with the back of the figure which no one could see, replied—‘The gods can see it.’ Our God will see it, is the greatest incentive to faithfulness in our work, be it sweeping a room, painting a picture, or writing a sermon. If we do our work thoroughly.—whatever it may be—in His dear

name, it is service acceptable to our King; those three little words '*for His sake*'—hallow and glorify the humblest labor."

"Dr. Raymond do not imagine that I profess to be influenced by any such motive; I confess frankly that I do not. The thought of God does not enter my mind in my work, in one way nor another. I want to make the most of my ability; *this* I am bound to do for my own sake, and the world's sake, but that I work to please any unseen Being, I will not pretend, for I do not."

"Your aim then is to perfect yourself, and gain an honorable place in the world; good so far, but, Mansfield, there is a nobler motive than that for using our God-given talents to the utmost, polishing our weapons, keeping their edges sharp and keen. I am sorry for you that you do not know that higher, heaven-born incentive—*for Jesus' sake*," and Dr. Raymond bent upon the young man such a look of tender pity, that Mansfield sighed, just a stifled sigh, but was it not a little upward-sent prayer? "For self and for fame, for God and humanity, which is the nobler motive?"

Mansfield did not reply; there was a moment's silence, broken by Mrs. Raymond saying play

fully, "Now it seems to me that you gentlemen have lost sight of the original question entirely. Ladies have the reputation of wandering off from their subject; I have known some gentlemen to do the same."

"Oh no! we have not lost sight of the subject; we are only taking a roundabout way of reaching it. You must be patient."

"Dr. Raymond," cried Mansfield excitedly, rousing to his own defense, "do not think me a heathen; I believe that on many Sabbath mornings, with the dew sparkling on the grass, and the birds singing in the branches, I have worshiped more truly than have many devotees in grand churches and cathedrals."

"Was it God, or the beautiful that you worshiped?"

"What is Nature but God? Can a man be very far from Him, who is filled with admiration for everything lovely in nature and art? Is not the beautiful akin to God?"

"Oh, Cousin Henry, how you do pile up the questions," interposed Mrs. Raymond, longing to quiet his excitement.

"It would be very hard for such a man to stoop to anything low or mean, but he may not be in-

fluenced by the highest motive that can appeal to the human soul—true love to God.”

Again Mansfield was silent, and Agnes asked a little hesitatingly—“Dr. Raymond, is there not a standard of right and wrong, entirely distinct from our own estimate? The Bible says—‘To him that esteemeth a thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean,’ but our thinking that a thing is right for us to do, does not always prove that it *is* right, do you think it does?”

“Certainly not. Paul refers in that passage to things which he did not consider vital; things that had no moral quality in themselves, but he says—‘Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;’ if anything appears wrong to us, we had better avoid it, lest we wound our own consciences, even if those monitors be a little morbid sometimes. There *is* a standard of right and wrong, and we must be watchful lest our own inclinations put things in a false light.”

“It seems to me you are wandering away from the subject again,” said Mrs. Raymond, laughing: “If you spin out this talk too long, we shall all be asleep in our chairs before you reach the important point.”

“We hold Cousin Agnes responsible for this

digression ; *she* branched off this time, but I imagine she did it more for my benefit than for her own enlightenment ;” to which charge Agnes smilingly assented.

“ We shall have to take away Aunt Maggie’s rocking-chair, if we want to keep her awake,” said Tom, who had just seated himself in a high, straight-backed chair ; “ if she would exchange with me, there would be no danger of her getting sleepy.”

“ No, sir, thank you, I cling to my easy seat, and risk the consequences. Cousin Henry asks ‘ if it is right for him to go sketching on the Sabbath.’ You reply—‘ no, it is not.’ Now, as Agnes says—‘ why ?’ She is always bristling with that interrogative.”

“ Because God has set apart that day for Himself, and commands us to do all our work on the other six ; the seventh day belongs to the Lord, and is to be kept holy unto Him. We have no more right to take God’s time and use it for ourselves, than we have to take the property of another, and call it our own ; we should despise ourselves if we stole a pin’s worth from another, yet we may steal God’s time without giving it a thought. When God gave the command to the

Jews, such threatenings and penalties were attached, that we must conclude that the breaking of it is a great sin in His sight."

"But do you think, Dr. Raymond, that those Old Testament ideas and standards hold good at the present day?" asked Mansfield. "Does God expect us to spend the day as those old time worthies were commanded to do?"

"Why, the *moral* law is just as binding to-day as it was when first given. Thou shalt not steal, kill, nor commit adultery; who questions these? Why should the fourth command be considered as annulled. When Moses came down from the mount—his face shining with the reflected glory of the Holy One—foremost among the commandments God had given him was this, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' You would not reject the rest of the decalogue, why refuse to acknowledge the binding power of the fourth? If the rest of the ten are to be implicitly obeyed, why look upon the fourth as a dead letter? If we ignore God's law in regard to the Sabbath, I cannot see why we should not ignore the whole code. No, Mansfield, keeping the Sabbath holy is not an old Jewish ceremony, but a living obligation, resting upon

us with as much power as it did upon the Israelites; surely, as reasonable beings, we should seek to understand just what the command implies, lest by some subterfuge of our own or the devil's, we may make a grievous mistake in our rule of life and conduct."

Mansfield looked sober. "I have never thought about it in just this light, indeed I have never given the subject any particular thought," he said honestly; "it certainly seems to be a more important matter how we spend the day than I had imagined."

"Is there not danger of mistakes in explaining the true meaning of the command?" asked Mrs. Raymond; "the lines are not distinctly drawn, as they are in regard to stealing, or taking human life."

"I see no need of mistakes; the principles are laid down very decidedly. If we are sincere in our inquiries, we shall not be left in the dark."

"Do you not think, Dr. Raymond," asked Robert Spencer, "that many people stumble over the kind and amount of work that may be done on Sunday? The Bible says—'Six days shalt thou labor and do *all* thy work;' now, of course, some kinds of work must be done on

Sunday, and others may be ; and yet not break the spirit of the command."

"All kinds of labor lawful for the day may be classed under these two heads—works of necessity and mercy."

"But what are works of necessity and mercy ? Is there not a wide margin just there ?"

"About that, each one must decide for himself ; a sensitive enlightened conscience, that truly seeks to be guided aright, will not go very far astray."

"But, Dr. Raymond," Mansfield exclaimed, "if I find myself in a better frame of mind when out of doors sketching, than I do when sitting in church, may I not better be out in the free air than doing penance in a cramped-up pen, while my spirit is out with the birds and flowers ?"

"Now, Mansfield, that is rather a childish question, is it not ?" asked Dr. Raymond.

"That is a reminiscence of your boyhood—the leg-aches you used to have, when compelled to spend long sunny afternoons sitting quietly in the house," was Mrs. Raymond's laughing comment.

‘You yourself admit Mansfield,’ continued Dr. Raymond, “that your Sunday work is all for self, for your own pleasure, to gain increased skill in your profession ; or to save time. Do you not think that your principal objection to giving the day to God is the loss of the time? You really begrudge the Lord, your Heavenly Father the little one seventh of time which He has reserved for Himself. You are naturally a generous man, does not this strike you as a little mean ?”

The tone and manner of this question made them all smile. Mansfield’s reply came quickly, and heartily—“Yes, it is mean, contemptibly mean and niggardly.”

“Then as to devotion being fostered by your out door work ; I have noticed that you and Robert, when busy sketching, or painting, are entirely preoccupied. If I read or talk, often you do not seem to hear, you are all engrossed with your work—how to catch certain effects, how to bring out certain features of the landscape distinctly on the paper. If you want to meditate, and worship in Nature’s great temple, my advice would be—leave brushes and pencils at home.”

“You see, Cousin Henry, that the Doctor does not intend to leave you even a loophole out of which to crawl,” said Mrs. Raymond, her kind heart a little pitiful toward the young man who was receiving such a plain talk.

“Oh! it is all right and fair, Mrs. Raymond, and I feel that it is all true.”

“And you know, moreover, that they are the words of a true, kind friend, do you not, Mansfield?” asked Dr. Raymond.

“I do not doubt *that*, for a moment.”

“The Sabbath was given to man as a rest day,” continued Dr. Raymond, “but it is far more than that, it is preparation day for the eternal Sabbath; for *one* day we are free from earthly cares and duties, that we may plume our wings for a heavenward flight. The sanctuary is God’s appointed place for us on that day. The Psalmist says: ‘A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.’ Then ‘The Lord is in His holy temple;’ there we may meet Him and ‘worship Him in the beauty of holiness,’ even if the preacher is not blessed with the gift of eloquence; there, as we listen to His word, and sing his praises, some clear ray of light, straight

from the throne of God may shine into our souls, to enlighten and comfort."

"Cousin Agnes calls the Sabbath her 'pearl,' among the days of the week," said Mansfield.

A bright smile lightened Dr. Raymond's face. "Ah! we all know something about the value that Agnes puts upon the day, or we may judge. She has hit the key-note in giving the Sabbath that name—a pearl indeed, beautiful and precious, with which no other day can compare."

"The Sabbath should be a glad, happy day, should it not Dr. Raymond?" asked Agnes.

"Of course," exclaimed Mrs. Raymond earnestly, "the happiest day of the week; Cousin Henry has a very false idea about *that*; he seems to think, that Christians demand long, solemn faces on that day; he has no conception of the joy the day brings to God's dear children."

"How can I have? Sundays at home were solemn, stupid days; that impression was indelibly stamped upon my boyish mind, intimately connected with those leg-aches you mentioned."

"A great many young people have that feeling about the Sabbath, and even some Christians, I fear; but it is all wrong. Solemnity is

not necessarily Christianity. As a rule, the happiest people live nearest to their God, and the Sabbath is their most joyful day."

"You forget, my good wife, how much dyspepsia often has to do with a sober face."

"No, I do not," said Mrs. Raymond, laughing. "I happen to know how dyspepsia will lengthen out a usually sunny face—as long as the moral law—even on Sundays, when there is most to cheer. But, dyspepsia excepted, I do think it would be better for the world if we could put more joy into our Sabbaths. This morning, when I heard the birds singing as though beside themselves with gladness, I thought how blessed it would be if every human being would welcome in God's holy day with songs of rejoicing."

"The resurrection day; the day when hope dawned upon a lost world; the climax of the great redemptive plan for saving the souls of men; for setting the bound prisoners free! Well may we sing praises with every returning Sabbath!" exclaimed Dr. Raymond, with deep feeling.

"Do you know it is getting late," said Robert Spencer, rising and looking at his watch. "We

have had a long session ; but I, for one, have been interested since I came in, and *you* do not look very sleepy, Mrs. Raymond."

"Oh, no! I have not been sleepy since we reached the real merits of the question. It was that long preamble that was a little soporific ; but I fear it has been a little dull for our young folks." Belle and Tom had resorted to the piazza ; the parlors were deserted ; the few listeners who were present at the beginning of the talk had slipped away to their rooms.

"I have preached a sermon, I fear," said Dr. Raymond, "and preached away my audience."

"You surely have, Dr. Raymond ; you are a little given to so doing," laughed Mrs. Raymond. "But we shall be obliged to excuse you this time, as we kept leading you on and drawing you out. The subject is prolific. I hope my boy here is not only silenced, but convinced," turning to Mansfield and giving him a gentle tap with her fan.

"I am convinced of *one* thing, my dear Mrs. Raymond—that I shall never take any more comfort in working on Sunday."

CHAPTER IX.

THE long conversation was interrupted by Tom, who came rushing into the parlor in great excitement. "Come out and look at the sky; it is just glorious."

Then they all went out to behold one of those wonders of the night that sometimes astound and delight the dwellers upon this little planet—immense bright bands of light streaming up from the horizon to the zenith, of beautiful shades and colors, illuminating the heavens and filling all space with their brilliant gleams. Every few moments they would change, flashing and darting upward, each new appearance seeming more beautiful than the last—more wonderful and strange.

Underneath lay the quiet valley, the plain and lake, all enveloped in fog; the weird light shining upon the rising mist, producing an exquisite effect. It was a glorious sight, one not often seen in a lifetime, but which, once seen, is never to be forgotten. Soon every one still

up in the house was out on the piazza, exclaiming, and admiring the marvelous display.

“What is it, Cousin Henry?” asked Tom. “What makes it? There must be a mighty fire somewhere to send out such great tongues of flame.”

“It is not like flame exactly—more like immense rays of sunlight or moonlight, with now and then all the colors of a prism. But I can not explain it, Tom; you must ask a wiser head than mine. It is called *aurora borealis*. But I do not believe any one knows very much about it. Even to learned men I imagine it is a mystery. It is supposed to be connected with the magnetism of the earth.”

“Well, I wish I knew all about it. I’d ask Dr. Raymond, but he’s talking with that gentleman. We could not see much of it in the city, could we? Glad I got up here in time for the illumination—these fire-works on a great big scale. Wish we were up on old Balder, where we were the other day.”

“I was just thinking how grand it would be from there,” said Mansfield.

“Oh! there goes one; ain’t it a beauty? It’s just magnificent! A tremendous Roman can-

dle! How it did dart up to the centre. I could almost hear it whiz."

"That is the most wonderful part of it—the silence of the whole thing!" exclaimed Spencer.

"We hear a great deal about the *voices* of God," observed Mrs. Raymond. His *silences* are still more marvelous to me—to think that there can be such a display as this in the heavens, without one audible sound."

And Spencer quoted the words of a noted divine: "A million worlds in their flight do not make as much noise as a honey bee coquetting among the clover tops."

"Men would make a noise about it if they had it to do; don't you believe it, Aunt Maggie?"

"Yes, Tom; I am very sure there would be a great uproar if men or boys had anything to do with Nature's great phenomena."

They all stood gazing and watching the beautiful coruscations until the light began to fade, the rays growing less frequent and less brilliant.

"The display is over, and I am off to bed," Tom exclaimed.

Soon all followed his example, leaving only Dr. Raymond and Mansfield on the piazza. Dr.

Raymond took the young man's arm, and they walked up and down a few moments in silence. Then Dr. Raymond spoke a few earnest, loving words, that Mansfield afterwards looked upon as the means of changing his course in life. Upward or downward, which should that course be? Upward toward the shining heavens above their heads, or downward toward the mist, fog and darkness of the earth beneath their feet? Choose you this night; which will you serve, God or mammon? was the import of Dr. Raymond's appeal. They were plain, faithful words, but spoken with such fatherly love and tenderness that they did not anger nor offend.

"Thank you, Dr. Raymond," said Mansfield at parting, putting out his hand cordially, "you are the only person who has ever talked to me on this subject, excepting my sainted mother when I was a child. God bless you for your kind words; they shall not be forgotten."

A deep impression had been made upon a human spirit. What arts would the devil use to dissipate it, that the sleep of indifference and sin might not be broken? That night Mansfield offered the first prayer that had passed his lips in many years. He hardly knew how to

address the God of heaven and earth; but memory carried him back to those time-hallowed words used at his mother's knee, "Our Father, who art in heaven." It was a stammering prayer, but genuine.

Henry Mansfield was a different young man from his cousin, Robert Spencer. He had none of the quiet evenness of disposition and temperament that characterized both Agnes and Robert. While often very determined in his way, it was more the wilfulness of the child than the fearless decision of the man. He was more easily carried away by the impulse of the moment, more impressible, therefore more easily influenced. He had taken one of his sudden likings for Dr. Raymond and his good wife, with her cheery pleasantries and sweet, motherly ways. His admiration for the noble, talented minister was unbounded. Cousin Agnes rejoiced to see it. "Dr. Raymond is just the one to win Cousin Henry to a higher, nobler life," she thought; and so it seemed. But there was another influence at work in the house, which was directly opposed to that which was exerted by Dr. Raymond.

Mrs. Lansing—a beautiful woman, a widow,

but still in her prime—had for several weeks been the life of the house. She had interested herself most unselfishly in getting up charades, tableaux, and little entertainments, to make the time pass pleasantly; gay and witty, very charming in face and manner, she had become a great favorite with the guests, drawing around her a little coterie of young people and some old ones, who were completely under her control, ready to carry out all her behests. She was gifted and refined, dressed very handsomely, and with exquisite taste, but was withal a complete woman of the world.

Mrs. Lansing made several attempts to win Agnes Spencer to her set, but did not succeed. At first Agnes admired the lady exceedingly, and entered cordially into some of her plans for enlivening the hours, but she soon found that this charming woman often spoke contemptuously of religious things, ridiculing them whenever opportunity offered, poisoning young minds with her sneers and witty speeches. Of course, this shocked Agnes, and she avoided Mrs. Lansing as much as possible, devoting her time, when not out in the woods with Grace, to her invalid friend, Miss Wright.

Mrs. Lansing soon noticed the change, and dubbed Miss Spencer "Saint Agnes," although she remarked one evening, as Agnes swept gracefully down the long parlor, looking very sweet in her fleecy dress, "She is certainly a lovely saint."

When the artists arrived, Mrs. Lansing made herself very agreeable to them. Two fine-looking young gentlemen were a fortunate addition to her party. Belle and Tom were taken captive the first day by her bright, entertaining ways, while she soon discovered that Belle's voice and Tom's drollery were gifts that she could utilize.

But at Dr. and Mrs. Raymond this pleasing but worldly woman looked askance; ministers were not to her liking, were they ever so genial and kind. That first Sabbath morning after Dr. Raymond's arrival, when he had a little service in the parlor, she was unexpectedly cornered, and could not leave the room without making herself conspicuous; she was too much of a lady to be openly rude, so she remained. But she did not hesitate afterwards to hold up the "affair" to ridicule, to the great amusement of some of her admirers. Still, she soon found that it was not good policy to say anything openly

against Dr. Raymond: he commanded too general respect; but she could throw out covert sneers, that had their evil power even over some young members of Dr. Raymond's church, who were stopping at the hotel for a few weeks.

Robert Spencer, too, soon took a great dislike to the charming widow, but Henry Mansfield was more easily influenced. Although he declared to Spencer, "Cousin Agnes is far more lovely in character," yet he was flattered by Mrs. Lansing's little complimentary speeches. He thoroughly enjoyed getting out on the piazza for a promenade and a little badinage with this bright, intelligent lady, who understood so completely the art of making herself agreeable, even if her wit was often at the expense of sacred things; but when she gave broad hints that she would like to be invited to join their sketching expeditions, the young artist was almost rude,—that was work; no company was welcome, excepting as figures in the landscape, unless it was Dr. Raymond, who knew how to entertain himself, and was an artist in his true love of the beautiful.

Ever since Mrs. Lansing had been at the mountains she had used her influence against

any observance of the Sabbath, keeping the young people, as far as possible, from attending the little chapel in the valley, doing all she could to make the house gay and lively, and getting up all kinds of excursions for the day. She was greatly annoyed when she saw a strong tide setting in the opposite direction after the arrival of Dr. Raymond. When she saw Mansfield join the church-going party that Sabbath morning, she could hardly conceal her vexation; from speeches she had heard him make, she had felt sure of him on *her* side. In the afternoon again she missed him, and saw him returning with the "praying band," as she called Dr. Raymond and his little party.

"They must have been down to that faith retreat," she said laughing, "the shepherd and his flock. I should think the little sanctuary would be rather small and warm, this sultry day. Strange that, with all their prayers, they do not give new limbs to that cripple. Tom and little Grace must add great weight to the supplications."

Many who stood near joined in the laugh; but one young lady, a member of Dr. Raymond's church, spoke up decidedly: "I think that is

wickedly unkind, Mrs. Lansing." She was the very member Mansfield had thought not very sincere,—a gay, dressy girl, who had grown careless under Mrs. Lansing's worldly influence the past weeks ; but deep in her heart was a true regard for her pastor. She could not listen tamely to such remarks.

That same evening Mrs. Lansing spied Mansfield in one of the little side parlors having a long, serious talk with Dr. Raymond. "That reverend gentleman is trying his hand at transforming our light-hearted, gay young artist, into a pharisaical, straight-laced churchman," she remarked to a companion as they passed the window ; it was said with a sneer on the handsome face that spoiled its beauty. "I will do my best to keep our young friend out of that trap," was her mental exclamation.

Monday morning Mansfield found Mrs. Lansing on the piazza, looking unusually handsome ; her dark eyes sparkled from beneath the witching brown curls ; her clear skin, brilliant color, and pearly teeth, any young girl might have envied. She was surrounded by her usual circle.

The impressions of the previous evening were strong in Mansfield's heart ; he was in no mood

to meet the gay woman. He turned away, but she had caught sight of him, and called out: "Come back, come back, you turncoat! come back and give an account of yourself!" playfully shaking her fan at him.

Mansfield walked slowly toward her.

"Where were you all day yesterday? pray tell us; we missed you sadly. You were not off on one of your sketching tramps, I take it. So many desert our ranks of late on Sunday, that it is really quite desolate. We thought you would surely give us your company in the evening, but you did not appear. Come now, confess; what did you find that was so much more agreeable than our society?"

Mansfield grew embarrassed under her railery, but finally said frankly: "In the morning I went to church."

"Ah! so I thought; and to prayer-meeting in the afternoon, and to private religious conference with the pious Dr. Raymond in the evening."

He winced under her charges, and tried to parry off her words; but she persisted. Evidently she was posted. "You do not look very happy this morning, after all your religious

privileges. Come, tell us all about it; what did you see and hear that was delightful? You should have a little pity for us poor sinners who did not attend.

“Dr. Raymond preached a very beautiful sermon, and we had some sweet music.”

“I do not doubt it; Dr. Raymond is a man of talent. Of course the music was fine, with yourself and the Spencers as performers. But I want to hear particularly about that prayer meeting. It seems you were allowed to enter the charmed circle with Saint Agnes and a few other choice spirits.”

“Do not speak in that way of my Cousin Agnes,” exclaimed Mansfield angrily.

“Excuse me, Mr. Mansfield; I meant no disparagement whatever. I have a great respect and admiration for Miss Spencer; I think she is perfectly lovely.”

This adroit speech completely mollified the young man, putting him in better humor with his fair persecutor. She went on talking gaily, but never losing sight of her object—to draw from him something that would put the little gathering in Ernest Saunders’ room in a ludicrous light. His sense of the ridiculous was

very keen. Soon he was laughing at her funny speeches, and unwittingly giving her bits of information to help her on in her caricature.

Robert Spencer, passing by, overheard some of the conversation. He was indignant in a moment. "Mrs. Lansing," he exclaimed bluntly, "we were nearer heaven in that little room than you ever were in your life, or ever will be, I am afraid."

"That may be, Mr. Spencer; but if I *am* far from heaven I am not in the habit of saying rude and uncourteous things to any one," she said stingingly.

It was a rare thing for this quiet young gentleman to lose his self control. Indeed, he was more indignant with Mansfield than with the lady; he felt ashamed of himself in a moment, and stammered out, "Pray excuse me."

Mrs. Lansing had no desire to be on bad terms with Mr. Spencer, so extending her pretty jewelled hand, said with suavity, "Let us be friends, Mr. Spencer, the best of friends."

The tone and manner were so sweet and conciliatory that there was no escape from accepting the truce, which he did as gracefully as possible. Lifting his hat, he walked away sec-

retly vexed with himself, Cousin Henry and Mrs. Lansing. And Mansfield, too, was vexed with himself; he could see that Robert's independence, although a little impolitely shown, was more manly than his own course; he was disappointed in himself to find that he had been so easily led and influenced.

For days Mansfield avoided Dr. Raymond and the Spencers as much as he could, devoting himself to his work during the day, while his evenings were monopolized by Mrs. Lansing and her set. He often absented himself from his own seat at meals if there happened to be a vacant one at Mrs. Lansing's table.

"There is no stability in Cousin Henry; he will never take a decided course," were Robert Spencer's words; but Dr. Raymond did not take such a discouraging view.

Twenty-five years more of experience in dealing with poor human nature had made Dr. Raymond both more hopeful and more charitable than the younger man. As a minister he had learned that Satan never loosens his grasp upon a soul without a desperate resistance; he knew, too, that the citadel of the human will is a castle

impossible to enter until God himself opens the door. Dr. Raymond treated Mansfield with his usual cordiality, ignoring all seeming coolness and distance, while dear Mrs. Raymond's heart went out towards this newly adopted son with increasing motherly kindness and affection.

Some day the blessed Saviour will make him His own," she said cheerily, giving Agnes new hope for this loved cousin.

But when the next Sabbath came and Henry Mansfield spent the morning sketching—withstanding his words to Mrs. Raymond the previous Sunday—and the afternoon and evening in the society of Mrs. Lansing and her circle, Agnes grew quite discouraged. "A lost day for poor Cousin Henry," she thought that evening. "Must all the good influences thrown around him be destroyed by the power of a worldly, intriguing woman? And I have allowed my anxiety for him to rob me, too, of the joy of my precious day; now, at its close, I will put him in my Father's loving hands, rolling off the burden."

Yes, troubled one, there we must leave the souls for whom we long. *We* can not convert

them ; *we* can not open blinded eyes ; but *God* can. If those we love can be

“ Brought home from sin and fears,
Brought home from death and tears,
Home for unnumbered years,”

it will be because Christ—the Seeker of the lost and wandering ones—sought them, found them, and brought them home to their Father’s house ; so to Him we must go with earnest pleading and trustful faith.

CHAPTER X.

THAT Sabbath evening, after Agnes and Mrs. Raymond had gone to their rooms, Dr. Raymond lingered on the piazza for a promenade and a little quiet thought, then went into one of the little parlors to look for a paper he had left on the table. There he found Mrs. Lansing and Mansfield in animated conversation, or rather Mansfield was talking very earnestly, his face all aglow, and Mrs. Lansing was listening demurely, with an expression on her handsome face that, to Dr. Raymond, seemed contemptuous.

“Pardon my intrusion,” Dr. Raymond said courteously; “I am looking for my paper.”

“It is no intrusion,” said Mansfield pleasantly; “I was just speaking of you.”

“Yes, Dr. Raymond, Mr. Mansfield was just sounding your praises; you know the adage—‘Speak of an angel and you hear the rustle of its wings;’” this from Mrs. Lansing with one

of her charming smiles. "Mr. Mansfield was just telling me what a delightful companion you are in all rambles among these hills and valleys, your wonderful eyes seeing so many things that are hidden to common mortals. I have never had the pleasure of joining one of your excursions."

"You may have that pleasure if you like; we are going this week to the lake—the distant one. You know that there are two, one that we cannot see from the piazza. Perhaps you would like to be of the party."

"Oh! thank you, Dr. Raymond; you are exceedingly kind. Have you seen the lovely little sketch of a charming little dell about a half mile from the hotel that Mr. Mansfield has been making to-day?"

"I have not; but I have seen the dell itself, an exquisite picture it is; I only hope he has succeeded in equaling Nature."

"Oh! Dr. Raymond, I fear you are satirical; no artist can do *that*."

"I did not so intend it, Mrs. Lansing. Mansfield copies Nature very faithfully. I have great confidence in his ability. Of course I know that nothing a mortal man can do can really

equal the work of the Great Being who created all the beauty the world contains."

"I presume, Dr. Raymond, you would be more interested in the picture if it had not been done on Sunday."

"I should prefer doing it some other day myself. God rested from *His* labors, and we should from *ours*."

Mansfield bit his lips in vexation; Mrs. Lansing showed a malicious desire to annoy Dr. Raymond. Then there darted into his mind the suspicion that a similar motive might have influenced her when she so insisted upon his making the sketch that morning, coaxing him on to do what he had not intended doing. "If you do not take the lovely picture we shall all think it is because you are afraid Dr. Raymond will lecture you for breaking the Sabbath," were her words of daring, and he, really afraid of her sarcasm, had shown his independence by disobeying his conscience.

"Of course, Dr. Raymond, we all have our own opinions on the Sabbath question," continued Mrs. Lansing, "and opinions are very apt to differ."

"Yes, we all have a right to our own opin-

ions; but, unfortunately, they are not always the touchstones that distinguish the real from the false, the right from the wrong. Our opinions may be very erroneous."

An angry flush covered Mrs. Lansing's face; but she had no intention of getting into a discussion. She changed the subject suddenly. Rising from her seat, she said gaily, "I have been trying in vain to persuade Mr. Mansfield to paint my portrait. You know how well he has succeeded in getting the likeness of that little midget Irene; the child stands out from the wall like life. Do you not think he might find me as agreeable a subject as a little black baby?" she asked laughingly.

Dr. Raymond joined in the laugh. "Yes, I should think he might;" then a little mischievously, "but you know, Mrs. Lansing, opinions differ," giving her a kindly glance, that the fair lady might have taken for one of admiration. Had she known the thought of his heart she could not have felt flattered. "What a pity that a truer, nobler spirit does not look out from that beautiful face!"

Something akin to this was in Mansfield's mind as the true, earnest minister and this

worldly, godless woman stood there together under the bright light. They suggested to the young artist a picture—a personification, should he call it?—of the service of God and the world.

“Well, I must bid you good night,” said Dr. Raymond, gathering up his papers. He bowed politely and departed, leaving Mrs. Lansing standing, and Mansfield sitting near, looking very solemn.

She turned to him—“Why, Mr. Mansfield, Dr. Raymond’s call seems to have had a very depressing effect upon you. Now I found him quite agreeable. Of course, he had to bring in a little of his cant and moralizing. He was just ready to read us a lecture on breaking the Sabbath, but I foiled him in that. I had no intention of listening to a homily this evening.”

“I don’t know, Mrs. Lansing, what you may mean by cant. If you put the same meaning upon the word that I do—whining, hypocritical piety—I can assure you that there is nothing of the kind about Dr. Raymond; he is one glorious man.”

“I presume he may be, Mr. Mansfield. You must not be so ready to take offense; but I see

that you are out of sorts. You need a good night's sleep to restore your equilibrium."

"I need more than that," thought Mansfield, after she had left him. He had admired Mrs. Lansing with youthful enthusiasm—especially during the past week had she made herself exceeding charming. He had tried to drown all serious thought in her gay society and that of her set; but that evening his eyes seemed suddenly to open to the fact that her influence was not heavenward, and also that he had made a mistake in his estimate of her character. With all her seeming sweetness, she evidently had a good deal of duplicity and maliciousness hidden away under her fair exterior; he was disappointed in her—a bitter experience ever, but especially so to the young.

The next morning, after the long talk in the parlor on Sabbath-keeping, Mrs. Raymond, Agnes and Belle, were sitting in Agnes' room, busy with some fancy work, but Agnes' thoughts were on the conversation of the previous evening.

"I find some precious promises to those who 'hallow the Lord's day,' Mrs. Raymond," she exclaimed, dropping her crocheting, and taking

up her Bible. "Here is one: 'I will give them a name better than of sons and daughters, I will give them an everlasting name;' and another: 'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.' Then in that passage that epitomizes God's directions about the day—'not finding thine own pleasure,' nor 'doing thine own ways,' nor 'speaking thine own words,' but 'calling the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord.' The promise is: 'I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father.' "

"But what does that all mean, Aunt Maggie," interrupted Belle. If we must keep the Sabbath as those last verses say, we shall be afraid to think or speak; it frightens me. Why, it's like the rules in some schools, so many and so minute, that it is an impossibility to keep them."

"There is nothing in them, Belle, to frighten us," Mrs. Raymond answered gently; "it only means that, as far as possible, we are to turn our hearts toward heavenly and spiritual things, putting out from our minds and conversation, as much as we can, all worldly thinking and

planning. You and I can do that, can we not? If thoughts of school, our dress, our visits, our journeyings—thoughts innocent in themselves—come crowding in, and drive out better things, we can say—go away, wait until Monday, can we not?”

“Oh, yes; we can drive them out, but I don’t know as we can keep them from returning.”

“Yes we can, with God’s help. As long as we are here in this world, we must have some thoughts of mundane things, even on Sundays. We must think of our dress enough to be neatly and appropriately attired; and a housekeeper has to think of several things, or the comfort of the family will be spoiled for the day. It means that we must not give these earthly things any unnecessary attention, not be absorbed by them. Our faces are to be turned heavenward, our hearts open and attune to all spiritual influences, our ears attent to hear God’s voice. If the soul is filled to overflowing with divine things, it will be hard for earthly things to find an entrance. They cannot receive undue attention; there will be no need of endless and minute rules.”

“Oh, I see! If the heart is all right, the acts will regulate themselves. I wonder if there is

not as much breaking of the Sabbath in heart as there is in outward conduct," looking very sober as she spoke.

Mrs. Raymond smiled. "I see you are for going to the root of the matter. I fear there is a great deal of heart desecration, my dear Belle; but it is a comfort to know that we are not to be the judges of the hearts of others. We may condemn our own hearts as severely as we choose—although even for *them* we must have patience and charity; but we have no right to sit as censors upon the hearts and motives of other people. We must leave those in God's hands."

"Mrs. Raymond, have you noticed how often in the Bible the Sabbath is referred to as a glad day, a joy and delight?" asked Agnes.

"I have indeed; and I wish the element of joy was not so often left out in our estimate of the day."

"Everywhere in the Old Testament they are spoken of as feast days. Why should not we rejoice in them, and anticipate them as we do Easter or Christmas?"

"There is no reason, Agnes, why we should not. I think the more we look upon the Sab-

bath as commemoration day—as the doctor loves to call it—the happiest day of the week, the more heartily will it be remembered and kept.”

“Then, Mrs. Raymond, after God had shown the Jews in so many ways that He wished the day kept as joyful but holy time, adding promises and threatenings, how sad and strange it seems to read what wayward, forgetful children they were, disobeying his command, until God required His Sabbaths at their hands. Seventy years they were in captivity, and seventy years their pleasant country must lie untilled and desolate, ‘until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths.’ ”

“There was not much gained by stealing God’s time then, Agnes, and there is not now. I was sorry Dr. Raymond spoke so plainly, almost severely, to Cousin Henry last night, for I think he is only thoughtless ; but I do believe that no man who attempts to gain time in that way will ever succeed, even in an earthly point of view. The power to do skillful work is God’s gift, as well as the silver and gold, the wheat and barley. He who tries to save time or money by working on the Sabbath will surely find, some time, that God will require His lost

days. I often think of this when I see men hastening to gather in their harvests or working in their counting-rooms on Sunday, as though anything could be gained in this forbidden way."

"I think," said Agnes, "that Cousin Henry was convinced last evening that he is in the wrong. I, too, feared that his feelings might be hurt by such plain dealing; but he seemed to take it all very kindly. Oh, I do believe it will not be long before he will come home to his Father's house!"

The light of a sweet, strong faith shone in her face as she spoke. Little did she think how soon that faith would be sorely tried.

"Yes, I have great hope that Cousin Henry will soon become a true Christian," said Mrs. Raymond.

"Aunt Maggie, do you suppose God will 'require' the Sabbaths that are just wasted and neglected, or spent in fun and frolic?"

"Yes, Belle, I suppose He will."

"You know, Aunt Maggie, in school, where there are so many of us girls together, we have great temptations in that line," and Belle looked very sober.

“There are some fearful prophecies about Sabbath breaking,” continued Agnes, opening her Bible. “If ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces : it shall not be quenched.”

“And the fire did destroy the palaces of Jerusalem,” exclaimed Belle, when the Assyrian king broke down the temple, the walls and towers, and carried the people and treasures to Babylon.”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Raymond ; “the great charge against the Jews was : ‘They have defiled my sanctuary and profaned my Sabbath. They have polluted my Sabbaths in the sight of the heathen.’ ”

“But, Aunt Maggie, I thought that *idolatry* was the great sin of the Jews at all times.”

“It was, Belle ; but Sabbath breaking was another, for which they were carried into captivity.”

“But, Aunt Maggie, were they not punished for worshiping idols on Sunday ? That was the thing God hated more than anything else they could do on that or any day. I am sure we are

in no danger of falling into *that* sin. Nothing we do on Sunday could be as bad as that."

"I do not know about that, dear Belle. We can carry our idols around with us in our hearts, and be worshiping them during all the sacred hours, as truly as the Jews did their golden calf."

"Well, *yes*; I suppose we can," very slowly.

Then a silence fell upon the three. Agnes sat looking out of the window thoughtfully, while the cool mountain breeze swept through the room, rustling the papers, and lifting the soft gray curls from Mrs. Raymond's broad forehead.

In a moment Agnes exclaimed: "Oh, Mrs. Raymond, how much there is in connection with this subject! The more we think and talk about it, the more important and valuable the Sabbath appears. Do you not think that want of thought and knowledge is the cause of a great deal of Sabbath desecration?"

"Indeed I do, especially among the young. If children are not brought up in homes where the day is revered, or are not taught in church and Sunday-school, how can they know the worth of the day? But if they are thus

taught, they can never lose that early impression."

"Then Aggie did her whole duty by us. She not only taught us to reverence the day, but she made it such a pleasant, happy time, that we could not help loving it. Tom says there is nothing at school which he misses so much as the pleasant home-Sundays."

Mrs. Raymond looked up affectionately at Agnes. "You see, my dear, that faithful, earnest effort is not lost."

Agnes rose from her seat, and putting her arm around Belle lovingly, exclaimed with deep feeling: "And now I can have my dear sister's help in teaching Tom and Grace."

Belle kissed Agnes tenderly. "I am no longer your little sister: I am about as tall as you are. Now put away books and work, and go out into the sunshine. You two must take a long tramp before dinner time."

CHAPTER XI.

LONG after Mrs. Lansing's departure Henry Mansfield sat by the table in the little parlor, with his head in his hands, questioning his own spirit. "How could I have been so easily influenced, so prejudiced against my best friend; how could I so easily forget my good purposes," he asked himself. Henry Mansfield seemed to himself a very contemptible fellow. Then he was vexed at Mrs. Lansing—vexed and disappointed. Once he had said to Cousin Agnes, "Mrs. Lansing is a perfect lady, so unselfish, so careful of the feelings of others." He wondered that his cousin made no reply. That night this same Mrs. Lansing had shown herself cruel and unkind; he had judged her too charitably.

He had admired her not only for her beauty and wit, but also for her seeming goodness of heart. Since he had been under Dr. Raymond's strong influence her ridicule of church goers, religious fanatics, and the like, often jarred upon his ears. He had seen the day when he

would have gone all lengths with her in this direction ; but his feeling in regard to ministers and saints—if Cousin Agnes were one—had decidedly changed. Still he had enjoyed Mrs. Lansing's witticisms even when at the expense of his own party, thinking them only due to her innocent love of fun. But that evening the scales fell from his eyes, and he saw her as she was—a hard, designing, worldly woman, who would lead him away from God and heaven, who was striving to destroy the influence of his Christian friends.

The longer he thought, the more excited he grew. At last he started up and went out upon the piazza to find a cooling breeze. There, as usual, all was peace—the same sleeping valley with its veil of mist, the stars above keeping watch so silently, the everlasting mountains in their stillness and grandeur, all so beautiful and so peaceful—the fair earth seemed the very abode of quiet rest.

“It is all a lie,” he muttered under his breath ; “the world is *not* the happy place it looks ; it is full of disappointment, sin and misery ; the people in it are a set of traitors ; there is neither happiness nor truth to be found.” The same

old fallacy that Satan ever uses to torture human souls; if one deceives or betrays, he whispers to our hearts, "All men are liars."

But as Mansfield walked briskly back and forth, the hush of the night stole over his spirit. He thought of that day on the mountain, when heaven seemed so near, the storms all beneath their feet; of Dr. Raymond's eloquent words, and Cousin Agnes' joyful face.

"There is nothing true but heaven," he thought; "those who are booked for that happy place are the only wise people. I thought that I had taken a step in that direction, but I allowed myself to be turned back, and turned against the only friends who can help me on the right course."

The young man's heart was full of the unrest that a human being must ever feel away from God. "O, my mother, my mother!" he exclaimed softly; "if you could only come to me; if I ever reach your home above the stars, it will be because your hand beckoned me to yourself, and my heart yearned for your presence."

He stayed out in the star light until he was cooled and quieted, then went in, having made up his mind to *two* things—"Mrs. Lansing

shall not find me a puppet in her hands any longer, nor shall she prejudice me against the noble Dr. Raymond and my other good friends."

The next morning Mansfield came down to his own table, with his old cordial manner and greeting. Pinching Grace's ears, as a "good morning" to her little ladyship, he seated himself by Mrs. Raymond—"my good mother," as he had named her. The sun was shining into the pleasant dining room; all the faces smiled him a welcome; everything looked bright and cheerful. The world was a happy place notwithstanding all his berating of the previous evening.

Tom had to give him a home thrust. "Glad to see you at your own table; hope you'll stay where you belong, and not go wandering off after other people," leaning over the table and speaking low.

Agnes gave Tom a reproving glance, and Dr. Raymond's eyes twinkled; then the conversation took its usual easy flow, interspersed with Mrs. Raymond's pleasantries. Soon they commenced making plans for the day. Mansfield proposed to Spencer that they start immediately after breakfast down the valley to a beautiful meadow—with trees, and a brook

winding through—which they had been so long intending to explore, and which looked so inviting from the distance. For a week past they had done very little partnership work. Robert was glad of his cousin's company and suggestions. Dr. Raymond asked, "May I join you in the course of the morning?" to which Mansfield assented gladly.

As they were hurrying down the piazza steps, all equipped for work—camp stools and umbrellas in hand, and leathern cases, containing paints and brushes, strung over their shoulders—Mrs. Lansing came out from the parlor, and her pleasant voice called out, "Why, gentlemen, you are off early; may you have a charming day."

"Thank you," said Spencer, lifting his hat politely; but Mansfield only bowed coolly. Mrs. Lansing was secretly vexed; she had other plans for the day; then she fully intended keeping Mansfield away from the influence of any of his Christian friends. From his manner she feared that perhaps she went too far the previous evening, showing more of her dislike for Dr. Raymond than she intended.

"How handsome Mrs. Lansing looked this

morning," said Spencer, when out of her hearing.

"Bah! did she? I did not notice. If she had as much truth and sincerity as she has good looks and charming manners, she would be a delightful woman."

Robert gave his cousin an astonished glance, but made no reply to his speech.

It was a lovely morning—everything sparkling with the early dew. The clear, liquid notes of the brown thrasher were heard in the branches. The air was fresh and invigorating. "Just the day for a tramp," said Spencer, as the two young men went springing down the steep path.

"We must hunt up a boy or two to play the part of fisherman," said Mansfield. Soon they met a specimen of the genus boy, with hands in his pockets, lazily driving or following a cow. "Just exactly what we want!" exclaimed Mansfield.

The cow was furnished with a tinkling-bell, for the pasture was more likely to be the highway than a fenced lot, and the bell was useful in discovering the animal's whereabouts.

"Are you driving that cow?" asked Mansfield.

“Kinder drivin’ her, when she don’t drive herself.”

“Well, if you have nothing else to do, you just come with us into the fields; we want to paint your portrait—put you in a picture.”

The boy eyed the artists and their paraphernalia suspiciously. “You don’t catch me in that trap, *I* bet. If I once got in, I’d never get out.”

“Nonsense, boy; there is nothing to be afraid of. We do not mean to hurt you. Come; I’ll give you this if you will,” taking out a bright piece of silver.

The black eyes danced. “Guess I will, if you’ll give me that; don’t see that every day.”

“We want to get into that field yonder, by the brook; you lead us there by the shortest cut, and do not take us through any bogs.”

They were soon at the desired spot. Bill Stryker—for that was the boy’s name—looked on in blank amazement while the young men prepared for work, seeming quite relieved to find their implements so harmless. It was a beautiful meadow, with a brook winding and twisting along through the green carpet, making delicious music with its rippling and gurgling.

Is there anything in inanimate nature more nearly alive than a brook? There were some beautiful trees scattered around, and some cows grazing quietly. The field had been lately mowed, but the one next them was still uncut. Mansfield pointed to it, exclaiming—

“‘ See meadowfuls of daisies break
Wavelike, at every wind’s behest
That wanders o’er them.’ ”

The chattering bobolink, all mottled, white and black, went skimming low across the field, adding its notes to the music of the brook.

The two friends were soon at work, and too busy to do much talking. It took considerable coaxing, and some threats of losing his pay, to keep the restless boy Bill in position long enough to get him on the canvas; but Mansfield finally succeeded. The wonder of the lad, when he recognized himself, drew forth peals of laughter from the artists.

“ You don’t say that’s me, du tell! How did you ever get it? It looks just like me, that’s a fact!” and he grinned all over his face.

They had been working a few hours, when Spencer exclaimed: “ There comes Dr. Raymond; only see him leap that fence like any

youngster. Bravo! Dr. Raymond," swinging his hat.

"I thought I never should find you; but for these tell-tale umbrellas I might not have succeeded," said Dr. Raymond as he came up to them, fishing tackle in hand, and all in a heat from his long walk. "But this is a charming spot, well worth a good tramp to find."

The dewy sheen had not yet disappeared entirely from the grass; "The feet of morning were still beautiful upon this shadowy meadow," and the distant "hills of God." Dr. Raymond took it all in as he stood for a moment enjoying the scene, then turned to see what the artists were accomplishing. "So this is the boy in the picture," turning to Bill, who looked greatly pleased at being recognized.

"Yes, this is Bill, our fisher boy," said Mansfield; "glad you see the likeness."

"How do you do, my boy?" and Dr. Raymond gave the grimy paw a hearty shake.

"This is just the place to do a little dreaming and sleeping too, if one is so inclined," and Dr. Raymond stretched himself out on the grassy bed under one of the trees, covering his face with his hat to protect his eyes from the sun-

light, which flickered through the branches. After a short nap he was wide awake again; soon he had Bill by his side, and was talking with him, showing him his own fishing apparatus, to Bill's great delight, and drawing out all the boy's knowledge of the art of fishing, and of the streams where trout could be found.

From that they went on to other things, until Dr. Raymond learned where the boy lived, and all about his family. Soon Mansfield heard Dr. Raymond trying to incite this ignorant laddie to an effort to gain some useful knowledge, then extracting a promise from him to appear in Sunday School the following Sabbath; and, lastly, speaking simply and earnestly to him of Christ and His love. Evidently Dr. Raymond had found the way to the heart and confidence of this awkward country boy. Would that lad ever forget the interest and sympathy shown him under the trees that pleasant summer morning? Perhaps there a slumbering intellect was awakened that would never be satisfied until it had gained an education, or a soul aroused that would never rest until it had asked and answered the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

“What Dr. Raymond can find that is entertaining in that green gawky of a boy is more than I can imagine,” thought Mansfield.

Dr. Raymond's interest in every little boy and girl they met in their rambles was a continual enigma to Mansfield. Excepting as he could *use* them, the artist voted them a nuisance; always handling things, asking foolish questions, or else too shy to give a sensible answer when addressed. Sometimes a pretty little witch of a face would look out from under a big sun-bonnet that Mansfield would stop to notice, wishing he could transfer it to canvas; but there his interest ceased. He never thought of wasting his precious time asking where or how the poor child lived. But with Dr. Raymond it was all so different; he evidently loved these children, and longed to do them good. While Mansfield was drawing a mental contrast between himself and Dr. Raymond, as he had so often done during the past weeks, the minister's cheery voice called out—

“Robert, I fear we have not canvassed this region very thoroughly; there are still many little waifs not in Sunday School, and many of them not even in day school. We must give

some more time to this work before we return to the city."

So this was the work that Dr. Raymond and Robert had been doing, afternoons, when he, Mansfield, had been beguiling away his leisure hours on the piazza with gay company.

Then Dr. Raymond went on to give a very interesting account of a Sunday School he organized in a country school house, when he first entered the theological seminary, telling how he managed to win the children to come, and, what is harder still, how he managed to *hold* them.

"I was young in those days—young in years, and young in the Christian life; indeed, I had only just consecrated myself to God and the ministry. It was my first work for human souls. I cannot tell you, my boys"—as he sometimes called Mansfield and Spencer, when alone with them—"how I enjoyed that school through all that season. I was brought up in the city; country ways and manners had all the charm of novelty to me; teaching and organizing were also new to me, but I was full of courage and enthusiasm. The joy of those Sunday evenings, when I rode home after 'one more day's work for Jesus,' I shall never forget. May

you both know it for yourselves. It did seem such a glorious thing to work for the Master. But it is time for us to be starting homeward, if we want any dinner to-day. It is a pity to leave this lovely meadow and brook, but I begin to feel the need of a little roast beef. How is it with you, gentlemen?"

"I imagine we are both in a starving condition if we stop to think about it. It is high time to strike tents and start," said Mansfield, putting down his big umbrella.

Bill received his shining coin, but lingered until all were ready to depart, then followed along, close to Dr. Raymond, for some distance, when he turned up a lane that led to a poor-looking house—his home.

Dr. Raymond, although talking earnestly, did not forget the boy. "Good-by, Bill, I will see you again before many days."

"That boy has a pair of bright eyes; I will look after him. Wish I could get one of my wealthy men to give him a chance in the world."

As they were walking homeward Spencer led the Doctor on to tell more of his experience in his Sunday-school. He gave them many little

reminiscences—some touching, and some very funny—describing his maiden sermon in this same little school-house, how embarrassed he was, and how near he came to failure. After the meeting, a kind but ignorant man came to him with this good advice: “You was a trifle flusterrated to-day, dominee. Nothing to be afraid of out here but the devil, and he’d just like to make you think you hain’t got no call; but don’t you listen to his lies.”

“And I did not listen. After that I went ahead with a brave heart. The joy of being a partner with Christ in the work of human redemption swallowed up every other feeling, and the blessedness of working for Him on the Sabbath day was appreciated. You see, Mansfield, I had just awakened from your delusion in regard to the Sabbath. I had just discovered that the day was not my own, to be spent in hard work over my books, but belonged to the Lord, and I wanted to make amends in some way for all my misspent days. I had spent so many Sundays working for myself that I longed to do something for *Him* in consecrated time that He would accept and bless.”

“I thought, Dr. Raymond, that your theory

was that the Sabbath was given us to rest and prepare for heaven—that all kinds of work were forbidden. I should think that so much work in Sunday-schools and among the poor might amount to Sabbath-breaking.”

“I think there is such a thing, Mansfield, as religious dissipation. We have no right to be so engrossed, even with labor for Christ, that we give ourselves no time for rest, thought and worship. But the trouble with many is, that the time they refuse to spare for Christian work is too often squandered in sleep, frivolous reading, or talking.”

“Do you condemn all sociability on Sunday?” asked Mansfield a little tartly.

“No, Mansfield; you know very well that I do not. Am I an unsocial man on Sunday?”

Mansfield laughed. “I must confess that I have found you very genial on *that* day, as well as on every other.”

As they neared the hotel Mansfield stopped to pick a curious wild flower, then called Dr. Raymond back to see how it grew, and Spencer passed on, leaving them alone.

“Dr. Raymond, I really did not intend to go sketching yesterday, after my promise to you; I was rather over-persuaded.”

"Do you consider that a real manly excuse, Mansfield," with a smile.

"Mansfield laughed. "I fear it is manlike, copied after Adam in the beginning. I think it would be more truly manly to say I did it of my own free will, and am ashamed of myself."

"I see how it was. I fear you do not quite understand Mrs. Lansing: she is a woman of culture and refinement, but a woman of the world, with a bitter hatred of Christ and His people in her heart. Her society is not what you need just at present, Mansfield."

"I know that. I want no more of her influence. She is not only worldly, but treacherous and insincere."

The two walked on in silence; then Dr. Raymond laid his hand kindly on the young man's arm, "Mansfield, my dear fellow, do not let anything turn your feet from that upward path that leads to God. You need your Sabbaths; you can not afford to lose them."

"Dr. Raymond, I am not worth all your interest and kindly effort; I fear I have no stamina; I am too easily led."

"Now *I* read you better than you do *yourself*. You have the most dogged perseverance in any-

thing you undertake of any man I ever met ; but you must be first roused, and thoroughly in earnest. Think what there is at stake for you in this matter. It is worth the exertion of all your powers of persistency and determination ; it lies with *you* to make the choice. Then there is One whose almighty strength is pledged for your salvation."

CHAPTER XII.

As the two gentlemen went up the steps, the piazza was filled with the boarders, enjoying their merry after-dinner chat. Mrs. Lansing spied the two walking along together in earnest conversation. Her lip curled, as she remarked, "Some more preaching, I imagine; poor Mansfield, he is quite persecuted." But Mansfield did not feel the least need of her pity, as he enjoyed his quiet meal with Dr. Raymond and Robert, with Mrs. Raymond sitting by entertaining them.

As soon as Mansfield appeared again on the piazza, Mrs. Lansing accosted him. "Glad to see you back, Mr. Mansfield; have you spent a pleasant morning?"

"A most delightful one, thank you; the most pleasant one I have had in a long time."

"Not a very gallant speech, since you spent yesterday morning in our society."

"Well, Mrs. Lansing, it is true, if not gallant."

His tone and manner vexed her. Forgetting her usual diplomacy, she said sneeringly, "Oh! I know how to explain it all. Mr. Mansfield's conscience troubled him yesterday—he has such a morbid conscience—then he stands in such awe of his reverend friend's comments. I do not wonder; those lectures must be very trying. He has been seeking absolution."

"I have done too much Sunday work to have my conscience very sensitive about it; but I have done more of it in the past than I shall in the future, if I know myself. As for Dr. Raymond, I consider him the best friend I have in the world. Nothing that Mrs. Lansing can say will change my opinion of him." Bowing stiffly, he turned and left the lady. That was the end of Mrs. Lansing's influence over Henry Mansfield. He treated her politely, but very distantly. She could not win him back to her set; she could not recall her stinging words, neither could she make Mansfield ignore them.

Sarcasm in a woman is like the thorns on a rose tree—we forget the sweetness and beauty in the pain of the scratch.

Henry Mansfield devoted himself to his work, and to the friends he had found so faithful and

true, while Mrs. Lansing found others to laugh at her bright sayings, often aimed at "priests and saints." Another minister and other Christian people had arrived, so there was quite a company to frequent the little chapel, or join in sacred music in the parlor.

Mrs. Lansing continued to be very popular in the house, especially with the young people; how could it be otherwise, when she did so much to enliven? Her resources were unbounded. She had a rare faculty for discovering and drawing out the special talents of the young; they were all her devoted admirers.

"If Mrs. Lansing would only use her influence to draw these young hearts to Christ, what a power for good she might be in the world," remarked Dr. Raymond.

Dr. Raymond had great faith in individual effort—one soul acting upon another soul, like the magnet upon the iron—not, however, to attract to itself, but to the Saviour. Yet he often said that such efforts "required the utmost care, tact and love, or they would drive a soul farther away from the great Center." He could see what such a woman as Mrs. Lansing could accomplish, if truly consecrated, with her

power of making herself agreeable to the young, of winning their confidence and love.

When Mansfield went up to his room, after dinner, he found on his table a vase of lovely flowers, and a little note from Cousin Agnes, asking him if he would not go with her that afternoon to call on Ernest Saunders, and show him the foreign pictures and photographs, which the invalid was longing to see. Ernest had requested her several times to remind her cousin of his promise; such promises were sure to be remembered by him, shut in as he was, from outward objects of interest. But Cousin Henry had been so distant in his manner toward her for some time that she had not delivered the messages. That morning he had seemed so like himself that she ventured to send him a little reminder.

“Why, bless her, of course I’ll go,” he exclaimed, on reading the note. “How could I forget that poor fellow so long!” then soberly, “he is not poor, he is rich; I am the poor fellow.”

He sent word to Agnes’ room at once, that he would be on the piazza, ready to accompany her, whenever she might appear. Just as Agnes

had finished her toilet, and was ready to start, there was a light tap at her door; opening it, to her amazement she admitted Mrs. Lansing.

"I have come, Miss Spencer, to ask a great favor; promise me that you will not refuse," in her most charming manner.

Agnes smiled, then answered simply, "You must tell me, first, how I can serve you; I always like to do a favor if it is possible."

"I want you to lend me Belle, Tom, and Grace. Are you aware what talented sisters and brothers you have?"

Agnes received the compliment quietly. Mrs. Lansing's manner always drew her within herself. "They are dear to me; but I hardly think they have any very extraordinary gifts, unless it is Belle, who promises to be a fine singer."

"Indeed, she has a wonderful voice, quite remarkable in one so young; you ought to allow her to sing in the parlor evenings; it would give others so much pleasure, and help her to conquer her timidity."

"Oh! she is too young to sing in such a public place; then she has not taken many lessons."

"So she tells me; but there is no one in

the house with a voice to compare with hers. Now I want her to sing at a little entertainment I am getting up. Then I must have Tom, with his inimitable drollery, to do a little acting ; while Grace is just the child I need in one of the tableaux. I have been talking with them ; they are just bewitched to assist, 'if Sister Aggie is willing,' so I thought I would speak to you at once."

"I am glad you did," then Agnes hesitated a little.

"Oh, Miss Spencer, it is a perfectly harmless little affair ; but I think it will give great pleasure to the inmates of the house."

"Well, I have no objections, if you think they can fill their parts well, and add to the enjoyment of others." With this permission Mrs. Lansing bowed herself out, expressing many thanks, but leaving Miss Spencer feeling a little uncomfortable. The contrast between the elegant, imperious lady, and sweet, natural Agnes Spencer was great ; but great as was the outward difference, that of heart was far greater ; the love of *self* was the ruling motive of one, the love of *God* the ruling motive of the other.

It was a rare treat for Ernest Saunders when

Mr. Mansfield spent a couple of hours by his bedside, showing, and explaining to him, the beauties and wonders of the lands beyond the sea. Mansfield was astonished at the intelligence of the questions, the enthusiastic interest of one whose vision had ever been shut in by his native hills. The young artist could give most entertaining descriptions of abbeys, cathedrals, towers and palaces, to which Ernest listened most eagerly; but when he asked of the moral and religious condition of the people who dwelt among them, Mansfield had little to tell. "I had no time to look into those things; the common people in most of these foreign cities are a miserable, dirty set; I had just as little to do with them as possible. In the streets of Naples you see the most horrible looking creatures, who hardly seem like human beings; they follow you around with beggars' importunity, until you are disgusted, and cannot endure the sight."

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Saunders; "poor and wretched in this world, and, I suppose, without any knowledge of Christ or heaven."

"I can not see how they could ever get any knowledge of anything that is good."

“But did you not try to tell them?”

“I could not have made them understand, and I had nothing to tell. I could not tell them what I did not know myself.” The young artist looked sober. Just then there came to his mind a passage that he found in his reading that afternoon—“‘The true cross of the Redeemer was the sin and sorrow of the world; *that* was what lay heavy on His heart, and that is the cross we must share with Him, if we would have any part in the Divine love.’”

“I fear I paid little attention to the sin and the sorrow of the people,” he said sadly, while Agnes looked up at him sorrowfully. “I had eyes only for the glorious works of art, which I went to see and to study. I cared nothing for the people, excepting to paint, occasionally, a striking face or picturesque costume.”

“With so many beautiful churches they ought to know about God and heaven,” said Ernest.

“I suppose some of them do; but most of those grand cathedrals and churches have Catholic service in a language the masses do not understand; they mumble over the Latin prayers, cross themselves with holy water, and think they have worshiped. One day I saw a forlorn

woman, in a rusty black dress, kneeling on the cold marble floor of a fine old cathedral ; the poor creature was crying as though her heart would break, but all the time counting her beads and repeating her prayers. Evidently she had some great sorrow on her heart ; but I wondered how much comfort she would get out of that mummery."

The tears stood in Ernest Saunders' eyes. " Oh, what would I do if I had no better resting place. I wish she knew of my Saviour."

He looked so sad that Agnes exclaimed, " Now, Cousin Henry, show us something pleasant and bright." How he did enjoy those views of the Rhine, with its castles ; of Switzerland, with its wonderful snow-crowned peaks and beautiful valleys ; of lakes, mountains, and lovely winding rivers—Nature's glories—with nothing to suggest the sin and suffering of the people.

" How can I thank you enough for all the pleasure of this afternoon," he said to Mansfield, when they had seen the last one. " I shall remember it as long as I live, and see some of those beautiful places, nights, when I am lying

wide awake." Just as they were leaving he said, very emphatically, "I know what I would do if I were well and strong; I would go to those countries and tell the poor people of Jesus Christ, who came to save the sick and the lost. If you ever go again, Mr. Mansfield, you must carry them the message."

"I hope to go again, some day; but I may not have any message to carry."

"Oh! yes, you will," with a look and tone that touched Mansfield's heart.

"How that poor man can be so happy all the time is a continual wonder to me," Mansfield remarked, as they left the cottage.

"God giveth him songs in the night."

"Now that's what I cannot understand. The more *I* think about God, the more wretched I grow. The only way I can have any comfort is by putting Him out of my thoughts altogether. I am tired of this struggle," he said bitterly.

Then, sweetly and gently, Agnes Spencer tried to lead her cousin to Christ—"the way, the truth, and the life." It was "the Father's voice calling to His lost child" to come home

to light, to warmth, to joy. And in the little cottage which they had just left, went up, at the same time, an earnest prayer that this "dear friend" might have "God's blessed peace and rest."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE next morning was rainy; dark, heavy clouds hanging over the mountains presaged a stormy day. Mrs. Raymond and Agnes took their work and went to Miss Wright's room for a little "visitation," as Mrs. Raymond expressed it. They were hardly seated when, with a hasty tap at the door, Belle entered, in her usual rushing style. "Oh! I've found you two at last—I've explored several rooms in the search. Mrs. Lansing is to have a rehearsal in the parlor this morning, and I must be there. Of course, it is to be private. I imagine the doors will be locked, so I thought I would give you fair warning." Then noticing the Bible in Agnes' hand—"Going to have another Sabbath-day discussion?"

Agnes laughed. "I thought, perhaps, we might have a little more informal talk on the subject, as Eva is feeling so much better than usual this morning."

Miss Wright was a member of Dr. Raymond's

church and of Mrs. Raymond's Bible class, but she had been denied all church privileges so long, that Agnes knew she would be glad to hear one of Mrs. Raymond's sweet, pleasant talks.

"Well, we will promise not to tire her," said Mrs. Raymond, "by confining ourselves very closely or logically to one point. We will take the liberty of branching off whenever a thought is suggested to our minds, in true woman fashion. Now, Miss Wright, if you have any objections to that mode of procedure, you must free your mind."

Miss Wright joined in the laugh. "Oh! I have no objections whatever; I shall only be a listener. I cannot agree even to ask puzzling questions."

"Well, Agnes is our lawyer; she will do that part."

"I wish I could stay," said Belle. "If you will wait a few moments, I will go and report to Mrs. Lansing; perhaps they may not commence in some time—it takes so long to prepare for any such thing—and they may not need me."

Before Belle left the room she noticed, with

a mischievous smile, a lovely bouquet of wild flowers standing on the table which she had helped Robert gather the day before, and which he had arranged with unusual care. Soon the young girl returned. She had excused herself to Mrs. Lansing, as she found they would not be ready to commence in an hour's time. "But Mrs. Lansing was very curious to know what attracted me to your room, and when I told her I wanted to hear what Mrs. Raymond had to say about keeping the Sabbath, she laughed and said: 'Oh! you poor child, how I pity you, to be obliged to hear all that harping on a tiresome subject; I should think you would be bored to death.' But I told her 'I was not bored in the least,' and she thought I had a very 'queer taste for one so young.' But, Aunt Maggie, I *do* want to hear all you and Aggie have to say, for at school many of the girls look upon Sunday as play-day."

No reply was made to Belle's little account of Mrs. Lansing, although both ladies looked very sober. Then Agnes asked: "Mrs. Raymond, do you not think that the word *remember*, at the beginning of the fourth commandment, is beautifully significant?"

“Yes ; I have often thought of it. What are the things we are most liable to remember? Are they not the important things—the precious things? God says the righteous are held in ‘everlasting remembrance,’ and for them ‘a book of remembrance is written,’ because they are so dear to Him—His jewels. They are not forgotten, but remembered.”

“I noticed,” continued Agnes, “that night when we had the fire here in the house, how the ladies recollected their diamonds and valuables of every kind, and one young mother came rushing into the hall with her twin boys in her arms.”

“Like the mother of old, those were *her* jewels,” interrupted Mrs. Raymond. “The true mother heart could not forget the darling babies in the cradle ; no more should it be possible for one of God’s children to forget or lightly esteem His day of days.”

“It is sweet to be remembered,” said Miss Wright.

“Yes ; every little token from one we love is dear. Are not our consecrated Sabbaths like tokens of our remembrance to our Heavenly Father? Jesus says, in the New Testament,

‘Remember Me.’ God in the Old—‘Remember the Sabbath day.’ If we love God with all our hearts, we must love His day—the two go together.”

“We have found many reasons why we should keep the Sabbath,” said Agnes, “but we have said very little about the manner in which the hours should be spent. One thing we have certainly heard thoroughly discussed, and that is the matter of working on that day.”

“I think we have, Agnes,” said Mrs. Raymond, smiling. “‘Thou shalt not labor,’ was God’s injunction. There seems to be great stress laid upon this part of the fourth commandment. All unnecessary work is to be laid aside on Saturday night—of this we can have no doubt.”

“But, Mrs. Raymond,” said Miss Wright, “I know sweet women — not members of any church, but I would not like to say they are not Christians—who think it no sin to crochet, knit, or sew on the Sabbath day.”

“Some of the school girls do sometimes in their rooms,” added Belle. “They say they can keep the Sabbath better in heart, if their fingers are busy, than they can if they are idle.”

"My dear girls," said Mrs. Raymond, very earnestly, "I cannot see how a direct breaking of God's command can help one to keep His day. I know the *heart* is to keep holy time, and that we may carry sin and evil with us even into the sanctuary; but surely doing what God has strictly forbidden cannot increase true holiness of heart. If all the world were to use their hands on this day, as on any other, there would soon be no Sabbath; God's beneficent plan for giving a day of rest to all his creatures would be frustrated, and what a weary place this world of ours would soon be."

"God wanted the Jews to keep it as a glad, festive day," said Agnes; "all labor and traffic were to cease, while the people, in holiday attire, were to go up to worship the Lord, their King."

"Aunt Maggie, do you think that writing letters on Sunday is breaking the command?"

"That depends entirely, Belle, upon the kind of letter you write. If you write of things that it would not be best to talk about on Sunday—matters of business or pleasure—or if you write to save time for weekly pursuits, thus stealing God's hours, I should certainly call it wrong.

Sometimes writing a business letter on Sunday is a necessity ; but those cases are rare."

"Then it cannot be wrong for me to write to Agnes when I am away from home."

"No, dear, it cannot ; Sunday is the best of all days for showing our love toward our friends as well as our love toward God. Of course you write to her as you would talk, if sitting by her side."

"I never write business ; Agnes always says 'leave all that until some week day' ; but many of the girls *do*. My room-mate used to write all kinds of letters on Sunday. It did not seem right, and I used to tell her so, but she only laughed at my 'prudish notions.' Tom says he always writes to Agnes Sunday afternoons on purpose, for he knows that writing to his good sister will keep him out of mischief."

Mrs. Raymond smiled. "Tom is right. The kind of letters we write depends very much upon the person we are addressing. In writing, as in conversation, the sin lies in the thoughts we express ; if we allow our hearts to dwell upon things that divert us from the heavenly and spiritual, it must be wrong ; it is not keeping the spirit of the command."

"I have a friend," said Miss Wright, "who always writes to her intended on Sunday. She says her best, most elevated thoughts and feelings come to her on that day, and she wants to give them to the one she loves best."

"Yes, I understand; your friend is a wise young woman. Probably her Sunday letters are on religious subjects—the joys and aspirations inspired by the services of the day. I know of no better time to write notes or letters on sacred themes, stimulating words to dear friends, or earnest appeals to those who are far from Christ; our minds are in the right frame, we are in the Spirit on the Lord's day—or should be—more than on any other day of the week. In all Sunday letter-writing, as in our conversation on that day, we need to guard against the expression of frivolous, worldly thoughts."

"Well, Aunt Maggie, there surely is *one* safe way, that is, to keep such thoughts out of our minds on God's day."

"Yes, dear Belle, there is safety, and there alone."

"I am very glad, Mrs. Raymond," said Miss Wright, "to hear this matter of Sunday letter-

writing discussed. I know people who really seem to make a convenience of Sunday to do all their corresponding, while others go to the opposite extreme, and think that it is wrong to write *any* letters on God's day."

"It is hard to lay down rules for others in this matter; but it does appear to me that if our hearts are fixed supremely upon God, if we are sincerely desirous to spend His day to the best advantage for our own good, the good of others and His glory, we cannot go far astray in the use of tongue or pen. If the one we love is absent from us, there surely can be no more sin in expressing our affection on paper than there would be in speaking our loving thoughts; and if we can write a word on Sunday that may win a soul to Christ, or cheer a fainting fellow Christian, surely this is blessed use of holy time."

"It all seems so simple," said Agnes in her sweet way; "I cannot see why we ever need to be in doubt; if the heart is only right, the speaking and the writing will take care of themselves."

"There is another thing that I would like to touch upon this morning," Mrs. Raymond

added, "if we are not making our talk too long for Belle."

"Oh! never fear, Aunt Maggie, Mrs. Lansing will not fail to send for me if I am needed; she knows where I am."

"I do think that there are some things about which the Christian young people of the present day—and some older ones—are very lax: those are visiting, riding, and walking for pleasure on the Sabbath. If I were a young lady, I should have my gentlemen friends understand that, as a rule, I did not receive calls on Sunday—of course, with one exception, from the one I had promised to marry; then I should tell them frankly that I could not accept invitations to walk or to ride for mere enjoyment on the Lord's day. Perhaps they would laugh at my 'foolish scruples,' but in the end they would respect me for my fidelity to principle, while I am sure my influence over them for good would be greatly strengthened. Now, my dear young ladies, those are my sentiments, freely expressed; please do not forget them, but try to circulate them among all your friends and relations. That is the end. I have preached one of my plain little sermons. I hope it will not offend," with one of her rippling laughs.

“No great danger of our being offended at anything you could say, Aunt Maggie”—this from Belle; but Miss Wright said soberly:

“I shall not be likely to forget, but it may require some nerve for me to take that stand. We have always had a great deal of calling and visiting at home on Sunday. Father likes it; still, he might be willing to give it up if I objected decidedly.”

“I see, dear Miss Wright, that it may be very hard for you; but you make the effort to redeem your Sabbath—it is worth the attempt. By gentle decision you may be able to win your father to your way of thinking. I do wish that I could sound my note of warning in the ears of every Christian young lady in the land. Many girls of real noble principles are thoughtless in this matter; and we know that ‘evil is wrought by want of thought,’ as well as in other ways.”

“Have you noticed, Miss Raymond, how few directions there are in the Bible about the way of spending the time? It is all ‘Thou shalt not;’ very little is said about what we may or should do on the Lord’s day.”

“The commandments are mostly ‘Thou shalt not;’ the ‘Thou shalt’ come later. When we

shall inquire how our Blessed Saviour spent His holy time, we shall learn that Christian work is to be blended with our Sabbath worship. The Jews had their Sabbath offerings: a lamb without blemish—the best they could bring; thus our best should be gladly given. The Psalms abound in exhortations ‘to bring an offering and come into His courts;’ to come with thanksgiving, and ‘behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in His temple.’ Worship and offerings were the two great features of the Jewish Sabbath, as they should be of ours. This we must not forget in this busy age, when there is so much we can do for the perishing. Christian *work* must not crowd out Christian *worship*. If we enter God’s temple on His sweet day of rest, bringing with us the sacrifice of praise, the incense of loving hearts, even if we are poor in silver and gold, He will accept our offering, and grant us a Sabbath blessing.”

“How with those who cannot go?” asked Miss Wright sadly.

“God will not forget them; their room of sickness and pain will be His temple,” with a loving smile.

“The fresh bread that the Jews were to bring

to the temple Sabbath morning is always very suggestive to me," said Agnes. "I do so like the fresh, clean things on that day, so typical of the cleansing the soul may receive that drops the things of earth to grasp more firmly the things of heaven."

"So do I, Agnes," said Mrs. Raymond. "The neat, orderly house, the fresh provisions, and clean attire, are befitting our 'bride Sabbath.' But for this there must be Saturday preparation, as we housekeepers know. But we must not talk longer to-day, for Miss Wright is tired. I fear we have not answered Agnes' question, or any other, very definitely," at which they all laughed. "But there are more days coming for another random discussion."

Then, as they separated, Agnes added, with one of her beaming smiles :

" ' With Thy joyous sunshine blest,
Happy be my day of rest! ' "

CHAPTER XIV.

A FEW evenings later in the week Mrs. Lansing gave one of her entertainments, which passed off pleasantly, and was much enjoyed by all the guests in the house. There were some little things that jarred against Agnes' feelings : she thought she discovered a tendency to ridicule religious people and services ; but she made no criticisms, and hoped it was not intentional.

Belle Spencer's singing was a prominent feature of the evening, while Tom's comicalities drew forth peals of laughter. Belle was an overgrown, bashful girl, not at all inclined to make herself conspicuous ; but that evening she astonished the company with the power and sweetness of her voice, while Agnes and Robert were still more amazed at her composure and freedom from all embarrassment, so different from her usual timidity. Evidently Mrs. Lansing had inspired the young girl with confidence in herself, so that she had full command of her powers of voice. Agnes felt very grateful to Mrs. Lan-

sing for helping Belle to forget herself and others, so that she could give all her thought and interest to the music she was rendering. It was just the helping hand that she needed. Agnes expressed her thanks to Mrs. Lansing most gracefully.

Saturday evening of the same week Belle came to her sister's room, where Agnes was resting, to have a little talk. Miss Wright had been quite sick for a couple of days, so Agnes had been confined with her friend, and had seen little of her younger sister.

"O Aggie," Belle exclaimed, "we are to have a sacred concert to-morrow evening; it is going to be just delightful, mostly singing, and just a few recitations."

"Why should Mrs. Lansing get up such an entertainment for Sunday evening, Belle?"

"She says those evenings are so stupid here, and you know, Aggie, they are quiet. There will not be anything to offend the scruples of the most fastidious; it will all be religious, and perfectly proper for the day."

Agnes could but smile to hear her sister, who was usually so simple and plain of speech, using Mrs. Lansing's highflown words. "I do not

see any need of getting up a concert, Belle ; we always have music in the parlor Sunday evenings."

"Yes, I know, just a few hymns ; and oh, how dreadfully they are sung ! Some who always will join make the most horrid discords. Mrs. Lansing says they may make melody to the Lord in their hearts, but they don't for poor human ears, and she don't believe there is any worship in such rasping sounds. I can't sing with them ; there is no use in trying. I just feel like stuffing cotton in my ears all the time."

"I suppose, Belle, it *is* trying for a well-trained voice ; but you know what Mrs. Raymond said the other morning, 'we must offer the incense of praise.' We can do that, even if the music is discordant. I do suppose that many hearts go up to God in those beautiful hymns, even if the harmony is not perfect."

"Well, Aggie dear, you have no objection to my singing to-morrow evening, have you ?"

"Really, Belle, I hardly know what to say. If it is just as you understand it, I can see no objection, although I do not like the name of sacred concert ; I only hope it will prove to be purely sacred."

"Oh! Mrs. Lansing says she knows all the good people in the house will be delighted to hear some sweet music, and will thank us for breaking up the monotony of the evening."

"You and I do not find the evenings dull, do we, Belle?"

"No, indeed; Sundays are never tedious to me; but Mrs. Lansing says they are to many, and I ought to be willing to do something for their pleasure. I tried to see you to-day, but could not find you. I cannot bear to say 'no' to Mrs. Lansing, she is so nice, and will be so disappointed."

"Well, Belle, what will you sing?"

"I thought I would sing 'Come unto Me,' for one, then Mrs. Lansing will help me pick out the others; but they will all be sacred."

"'Come unto Me' is very sweet. If you sing it with all your heart it may be a message to some wandering soul."

"Then you do not object to my singing?"

"No; only be very careful what you sing."

"Mrs. Lansing wants Tom to recite something, but he will talk to you about that," and kissing her sister good night, Belle went to her own little room, next to that of Dr. and Mrs. Raymond.

After she had gone, Agnes thought it all over and felt troubled. "What is that scheming Mrs. Lansing trying to do now?" she wondered, then checked the suspicious thought. "I must not let any worry spoil my happy day," was her conclusion; "but I must see Tom in the morning."

"Another glorious Sabbath among these mountains," exclaimed Dr. Raymond, as Agnes met him on the piazza before breakfast. Mansfield was sitting near; indeed, he had been Dr. Raymond's constant companion during the past week. "We have been favored with such pleasant Sundays," continued Dr. Raymond; "they are so quiet and peaceful, so different from our city days. 'Peace is so beautiful, I do so yearn for her to clasp the world's poor tortured heart.' " Dr. Raymond's face grew sober as he quoted these words. He was thinking of a conversation he had with Mansfield the previous evening, when the young artist had opened his heart as never before, revealing all its unrest. The young man's face did not reflect the morning's brightness, but looked clouded and unhappy. "And she will come, beams of light will kindle the clouds, day will break, the shadows flee away,

the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings,' just as this morning's sun has dawned upon the earth, and with that rising will come the peace of God to this sin-tossed world."

"*When* will that glad time come?" asked Mansfield, rather sadly.

"Who can foretell when it will come for the *world*?" Then, facing toward Mansfield, he said gently, "It will come to the *individual* heart, whenever that heart will unbar the shutters and let in the heavenly light."

For years Mansfield had been wandering on, forgetful and indifferent, but growing constantly more and more selfish and worldly. Now that a kind friend urged him to pause and consider, he realized how far he was from God, how hard it would be for him to change his course. He envied these good friends their peace and joy, but he was not ready to *choose* the good part; his heart rebelled against yielding himself to Christ. This blessed One—infinite in love and patience—will stand at the door of a human heart, knocking and waiting, but will never enter that heart as an unbidden and unwelcome guest. Poor heart! can you not see that you

must open the door and invite your heavenly visitant to come and abide?

"How unruffled and peaceful you look this morning, Cousin Agnes," said Mansfield, as Dr. Raymond walked away, leaving the two alone. "What lovely wild roses those are," pointing to some flowers she wore; "where did you get them?"

"Oh! Grace and I have found a place where they grow in great profusion; we still find a few, although it is late for them."

"I don't like wild roses very well, they are too full of thorns; I like the *Kalmia* better."

"Yes, the laurel is very beautiful; but it is gone now, so I take the roses and cut off the troublesome thorns," laughed Agnes.

Mansfield laughed, and replied a little sneeringly, "I believe that you and Dr. Raymond have learned the secret of picking the roses of this naughty world without getting the thorns. *I* have no such skill, I fear."

"Oh! it comes by practice," said Agnes smiling, but thought she felt a little thorn pricking her just at that moment—a thorn of anxiety lest the delightful Mrs. Lansing was leading Belle and Tom into something that was not

quite right. But the breakfast gong sounded, and after breakfast came the usual short morning service in the parlor. There was a new minister to assist—a young man—Mr. Fenton. Agnes was glad to see that Cousin Henry came in, and seemed interested. When they came from the parlor she hastened to her room to prepare herself and Grace for church. When they were all ready to start Tom was missing; he had hurried away from breakfast without giving her any opportunity for questions about the evening's entertainment. "Where is Tom?" she asked.

"He has probably gone on ahead, leaping over the rocks in true boy style," suggested Robert; "that is more fun than walking along with us, slowly and quietly."

But Tom was not in church, and Agnes felt worried. The young minister preached. Had he known the exact state of Mansfield's mind he could not have uttered more helpful words. Cousin Henry sought Agnes' company home. "That man knows what it is to be in the dark, Cousin Agnes, not to know which way to go; he has been there evidently, but he has come out where it is all as clear as noonday; I do wonder how he did it."

"He went to God for light, Cousin Henry."

"He *went*, did he? then he must have wanted to go. I rather think that Dr. Raymond is right when he says that 'God will not force Himself upon any soul.'"

As they were walking on, Mansfield suddenly asked, "Do you know there is to be a sacred concert in the parlor this evening?"

"Yes, so Belle tells me; she and Tom are to be performers, I am sorry to say; but I suppose it will be perfectly appropriate for the day, so Mrs. Lansing gives Belle to understand."

"Oh! it is nothing bad, I presume; but there will be nothing *sacred* about it, in your sense of the word, if Mrs. Lansing is the ruling spirit."

Agnes looked so troubled that Mansfield, to divert her thoughts, proposed that they stop and make Ernest Saunders a little call. Agnes consented at once, as she thought Miss Wright might need her care in the afternoon. It was only a little out of their way. As they neared the cottage they found the door invitingly open, and heard the hum of voices. Stepping within, they beheld a touching sight—a group of little folks gathered around Earnest's bed, while he was sitting propped up, Bible in hand, looking

very bright and happy, as he talked earnestly to his eager listeners. Agnes hesitated, but Ernest called out cheerily—

“Oh! Miss Spencer, come in, and welcome; it is only a few of my little friends.”

Pictures and cards lay on the bed, while in the vase by the window were beautiful flowers. Then Agnes understood how it was that the vase was always supplied with fresh flowers; it was these loving little hands that brought these heart offerings—sweet messengers of gladness from wood and glen. Mrs. Saunders rose to offer them chairs, but Agnes declined. “We will not interrupt your little sermon; do the children come every Sunday, Ernest?”

“There are some here almost every pleasant Sunday, and they come other days; they seem to love to come to my room; I cannot tell why they love me as they do,” looking around affectionately at the bright little faces. “I am glad you and Mr. Mansfield happened in just in time to see them.”

Agnes thought she could guess why the children loved him, as she glanced first at Ernest, and then at the happy little group. A sweet, blessed power it is, to be able to win the love of

children—those wise little readers of human hearts. Ernest Saunders possessed this power, and he used it to lead them to Christ, the children's friend.

“You do not know, Miss Spencer, how much sunshine and gladness they bring into my life.” He looked up at her with a bright smile, that had something in it that almost brought the tears to her eyes. Was it that it made her realize for the moment how much had been left out of his life? “Now sing ‘There is a happy land,’ for these friends before they go,” said Ernest, and the childish voices sang of the land where pain and sickness cannot enter.

“Have you ever noticed, Cousin Henry, the peculiar ring to Ernest's voice?” asked Agnes, after they left the cottage.

“I had not thought of it; but now you mention it, I think there is something very musical about his voice, and very pathetic.”

“It is a tone which, I think, you do not find excepting in persons of deep nature, who have sounded the depths of suffering and trial.”

Henry Mansfield looked at his cousin with pity in his eyes, and the thought in his heart—
“there is something of the same tone in your

own voice," but he only said, "He has risen above it all; I would give a fortune for his rest and peace. One thing that I *did* notice that first Sunday I saw Saunders, was an appealing look in the eyes; it touched my very heart."

Tom did not make his appearance at the dinner table. Mrs. Lansing and many of the young people were also absent. Agnes felt very certain that Tom had gone with the company on some excursion. She spent the most of the afternoon with Miss Wright, and when she came down to tea she found the parlor prettily trimmed with vines and flowers, while the wanderers were all in the dining room.

"Did you have any dinner, Tom?" Agnes asked kindly.

"Oh, yes! we had some lunch," but the usually frank boy did not look up into his sister's face.

"How did you happen to go, Tom?" Agnes asked, as they were going out from tea.

"Why, you see, Aggie, Mrs. Lansing and the ladies wanted those vines and flowers, and they said that I must go with them, because I knew better than any one where they grew. I was going up to tell you about it, but Mrs. Lansing

said she was in a hurry, that we would be back soon, and she would shoulder all the responsibility."

Tom talked rapidly, then hastened away, as if afraid of being asked more questions. Agnes' heart was heavy; it was all so different from her affectionate brother, who was always so careful of her feelings and wishes, always so sure to tell her of his movements and plans. Agnes Spencer had been both mother and sister to these children. By her loving sweetness and gentle firmness, she had won their hearts and controlled their lives, without their feeling the irksomeness of being controlled. Since she had been in delicate health, Robert, and even Tom, had watched over her with loving care. Dear, fun-loving Tom was the one of all the family who had given the sister heart the most anxiety; she could not bear the thought of losing his confidence even in the smallest matter.

"'A sacred concert!' How delightful! No one but charming Mrs. Lansing would ever have thought of such an innocent entertainment for Sunday evening; even the ministers in the house cannot object." These were the remarks of Mrs. Chapman to several other ladies, as they

sauntered on the piazza after tea. They were all members of Christian churches, but had found their Sabbaths among the mountains exceedingly dull. To attend the little chapel, and sit in a small, warm room, to listen to a plain sermon, was more than their Christian fortitude could endure. They went to church the day that Dr. Raymond preached, but *that* was the extent of their public worship for the summer. They would not allow themselves to take long excursions on God's day, but in rambles, chit-chat, light reading, and long naps, the precious hours were frittered away—the Sabbaths were not “remembered.” At home they would have thought it wrong to spend the time as they allowed themselves to do here, at this resort.

In packing their trunks for the season, providing for every possible contingency, Sundays had been left out of the calculation—religious books and papers had been forgotten. The children roamed at will, having a long vacation from Sunday School and Sunday teaching of any kind. After Mrs. Raymond's arrival, she gathered the little folks around her on Sunday afternoons to hear Bible stories. They always greeted her with delight when she ap-

peared, armed with pictures and cards. Among the interested listeners was always the cook's mite of a daughter, little Irene. In one little song her lisping voice was always heard; it was the children's favorite—"Jesus loves me."

"Why do not the mothers adopt this way of spending some of holy time?" asked Agnes.

"Want of thought and want of plan explain it all," answered charitable Mrs. Raymond. But was there not also some want of love and reverence for the day of the Lord? Do we often forget the prized treasures?

Mrs. Lansing's sacred concert proved to be about what Dr. Raymond feared—an entertainment very much like the previous ones, while its preparation had cost a great amount of Sunday work. The only thing about the whole affair really appropriate for Sunday evening was Belle Spencer's sweet song, "Come unto Me," which she rendered beautifully, singing it with all her heart, as Agnes had suggested. It proved to be a message to *one* heart at least. In the ears of Henry Mansfield it sounded like a call from God. Ah! why do these gifted ones so often forget the mission of a glorious voice in this sin-weary world? As Belle finished the

song, Agnes saw Cousin Henry leave the room ; she saw him afterwards sitting on the piazza by one of the windows.

Belle also sang an Ave Maria, and several ballads that could not be called sacred by any stretch of imagination. She had objected to singing these, but at the last moment had been overruled by Mrs. Lansing's stronger will ; girl like, she had yielded to the magnetic influence. "They are sweet and lovely," Mrs. Lansing had said ; "then you sing them so beautifully, they must be elevating." There was other singing beside that of Belle Spencer, but nothing really sacred ; then there were recitations, dialogues, and tableaux taken from Bible scenes. Some of the selections were very beautiful, and some very funny, with an occasional hit at Christians and churches, their discords and quarrels. Tom Spencer recited a witty piece of poetry, which, to some present, sounded like a burlesque of religious things. Agnes felt like dropping her head, although she knew that Tom saw the fun only, without thinking of the real import of the lines. Agnes blamed herself for not going to Robert or Dr. Raymond with the matter ; but her mind had been so pre-occupied with the ill-

ness of her friend, that she had not realized how this affair might end. Indeed, she had no idea that Mrs. Lansing would dare thus openly to disregard the feelings of so many in the house.

Mrs. Lansing had rare elocutionary gifts ; she had drilled the young people so that many things were finely given. At the close of the entertainment, Mrs. Lansing herself recited a bright little poem, in a very expressive manner ; it was her own composition, Dr. Raymond felt certain ; in it she pictured the Pharisee as objecting to innocent amusements, making long prayers, and laying great stress upon times and seasons. Dr. Raymond had been sitting on the piazza, by an open window, where he could hear all that was said. As Mrs. Lansing finished, he stepped into the room and begged the privilege of adding his contribution to the evening's entertainment. He commenced with a short poetical quotation, very effectively given : " Without—

' Ten thousand tender starry eyes smile at the world at rest,
The weary world, hush'd like an infant on its mother's
breast !

The great old hills thrust up their foreheads in rich, sleeping
light :

How proudly grand and still they stand, worshiping God
to-night !'

And beyond the mountains and the silent stars in the heavenly city, are many whom we love, casting down their golden crowns at the feet of Him who died to save this weary world, this sin-cursed world ; they, too, are worshiping God, our Saviour, this Sabbath evening. Sweet voices that we know and miss from our earthly music, this night are singing peans of praise to Him who hath redeemed them with his blood. Probably there are none here, this evening, who would not recognize some voice in that celestial choir—a voice that once made melody in their home. And what is that song to-night? Is it not praise and thanksgiving to Him who rose from the tomb on Sabbath morning?

“Think what this day is!—the resurrection day of Christ Jesus, our Lord. After a death of agony and shame, and a sleep in the dark grave, on Sabbath morning He burst the bonds of the tomb to flood the world with His glorious light. What brave, steadfast love was His! a love that could die for you and me. Have we been mindful of this wonderful love of His, on this, His own blessed day? O, dear friends, if we have not kept our tryst with Him this day in His sanctuary, or elsewhere, if we have failed

to bring to him our tribute of praise and gratitude—our Sabbath offering—let us here—among ‘the worshiping hills and the silent stars’—unite with the heavenly choir in one glad hymn of rejoicing that Christ has risen, and that God has given us one day in seven to commemorate His redemption of the world. Before this day closes, and its account goes up to God, let us redeem the precious hours from thoughtlessness and worldliness, and give these last moments of holy time to Christ our King.”

Then Dr. Raymond, with a motion of his hand, broke forth in a clear, strong voice,—“Praise God from whom all blessings flow;” all the company rose to their feet and joined heartily in the doxology; then quietly they scattered to their rooms, or gathered in little groups on the piazza, discussing in low tones the propriety of such an entertainment for Sunday evening. Dr. Raymond’s telling words had turned the current; those careless Christians who had spoken so approvingly of the “sacred concert,” could but see that it was not honoring God’s day as it should be honored, while some, in the seclusion of their chambers—following Dr. Raymond’s advice—tried to redeem the last

moments of holy time from utter desecration, realizing how they had squandered the precious hours during their weeks of recreation amongst the hills.

"One does not remember," said Mrs. Chapman to a friend, "when at such a place, that the same obligations rest upon them to keep the Sabbath, as when at home; there are so many temptations to forget. It was all very pleasant this evening, but at home we should not think it right to attend such an entertainment on Sunday evening."

The covert sneers at religious things were noticed and felt by some, while others could hardly believe there was any such contempt expressed or intended, so much that was recited was so sweet, beautiful, and as Mrs. Lansing said, "really elevating."

CHAPTER XV.

DR. RAYMOND'S little speech was an unexpected ending to the evening's pleasure for which Mrs. Lansing was wholly unprepared. She followed him out on the piazza to find him talking quietly with Mansfield and Spencer; she had lost her usual self-possession, and spoke hastily and angrily.

"Dr. Raymond, I considered it very rude indeed for you to say what you did this evening; you really had no right to interfere with my arrangements; if I had desired you to preach a sermon, I would have given you an invitation. I must say that I thought it very intrusive. You carried the impression that our simple, innocent evening's enjoyment was a heinous sin."

"Excuse me, Mrs. Lansing, if I seemed rude or intrusive; I did not intend to be." Dr. Raymond spoke quietly and politely. "I certainly did not consider it a proper thing for Sunday evening; we were invited to a 'sacred concert,'

but there was nothing sacred about it, if we except one or two songs; some things were very pleasant, but the sneers at religious people and services were hardly polite, considering that nearly half of your audience were professing Christians. Still, do not imagine that I spoke on that account; I was not thinking of the personal feelings or opinions of yourself or your listeners, but of the honor of my Master—the King. I could not sit by and see His day dishonored without bringing in my protest, or, at least of trying to remind the company of the fact that it was God's holy day, a fact so easily forgotten at a place like this, where all are seeking pleasure and recreation."

Mrs. Lansing stood tapping the railing restlessly with her fan while Dr. Raymond was talking, but she could not interrupt him, his tone was so mild and gentlemanly. Then he rose, offering her a chair. "Come, Mrs. Lansing, take a seat; you must be tired after your evening's labors. Let us talk this matter over dispassionately."

Mrs. Lansing hesitated; others had gathered around; to depart would look like being vanquished, so she reluctantly took the proffered

chair. "There is nothing to talk over that I am aware of, Dr. Raymond; I certainly felt that I was not treated as a lady should be."

"I am sorry if that is your feeling; I had no intention of being ungentlemanly. One thing I want to say; do not imagine that my little speech was called forth by your own words at the close. Of course I understood their sarcasm, and I will shake hands with you on the Pharisee question; I hate them as heartily as you do. The religion that consists in outward observances, leaving out of heart and life mercy, truth and love, is not the religion of Christ. On that subject I am sure we are agreed."

By that time the lady was herself again. "Oh! Dr. Raymond, pray do not suppose that there was any reference to yourself—or to others in the house—in anything that was selected this evening. I have met such people. There are such people in the world, you know; but, of course, present company is always excepted," with a pleasant laugh.

"Well, Mrs. Lansing, it does not hurt any of us to have our possible faults and feelings held up to light; *that* was not the thing that troubled me, but rather the thought that we, as a large

family, were breaking the command, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' "

Mrs. Lansing rose at once, and said laughingly, "Now, really, Dr. Raymond, I must depart; you and I could never agree on that question; argument is useless," and bowing gracefully she retired, leaving the gentlemen to continue the conversation.

For many days Mrs. Lansing's "sacred concert" was the subject of many animated debates in the house. Many careless, thoughtless ones were aroused to see that they had not been spending God's time as it should be spent.

"Anything is better than apathy and indifference," remarked Mrs. Raymond to Agnes. "There is nothing like waking up the slumberers, and that is what Mrs. Lansing has accomplished most effectually."

But Mrs. Lansing did not attempt another Sunday evening entertainment, although she had planned to have something of the kind every week. She jested lightly with her young people about their efforts not being appreciated. In her heart she felt that she had been foiled by Dr. Raymond, but she had the grace and diplomacy to conceal her vexation. Still her secret

ill will toward Dr. Raymond and his wife showed itself in little ways. Possibly she, and others too, sometimes wondered at the sweetness and kindness with which they always treated her, but could they have heard the fervent prayers offered in her behalf by this noble pair, all wonder would have ceased. Certain it is that we cannot cherish any bitter feeling toward one for whom we are earnestly praying.

That evening, after the entertainment, Agnes went to her room tired and heavy hearted. Soon Mrs. Raymond came, to soothe and comfort in her motherly way.

"Oh! I am so sorry, Mrs. Raymond, that I did not make more effort to keep Belle and Tom from taking part this evening."

"Regrets are useless now, Agnes; moreover, Belle's song was all that redeemed the affair from being entirely secular; that song may have reached some heart, who can tell? As for Tom, he did not realize what he was doing, he is so gay and thoughtless, and Mrs. Lansing is very pleasing to the young. *You* cannot shield him from every temptation; you will have to leave him in better hands."

But the thing that troubled Agnes Spencer

more than all else was the thought that for the first time in his life Tom had not come to her with his plans, but had tried to deceive her, and deception in Tom was something to be feared; she wanted his confidence, of all things. "He is the most loyal and devoted of brothers," said Mrs. Raymond comfortingly; "quite like a knight of the olden time; by to-morrow morning he will be a very penitent, loving fellow."

And thus it proved to be. Agnes had a severe headache, and did not appear at the breakfast table. Tom could hardly wait to finish his meal, but hurried off to "dear Aggie's" room. "I cheated you, Aggie, yesterday, and oh! I'm awful sorry," was his confession. "Mrs. Lansing just coaxed me up until I did precisely what she wanted. I did not like to recite that piece last evening; I knew it was not just right for Sunday. When I was through I looked up and saw your sober face, and it took every bit of fun right out of me," and impulsive Tom showered kisses and caresses upon the sister that he loved with all his heart.

"Mrs. Lansing don't get me to perform at any more of her 'sacred concerts.' But didn't Dr. Raymond talk beautifully? and oh! how

vexed Mrs. Lansing was. I don't know whatever made me go off with her to the woods in the morning instead of going to church; she just *made* me go, with her sweet, coaxing ways."

"Well, dear Tom," said Agnes tenderly, "you will have to learn to say *no*, and say it very decidedly, if you want to do what is right; there are always those who are ready to coax us to do what is wrong."

"I know that well enough, Aggie; I have found that out at school; the boys know I can say *no*, but someway a lady is different."

Then Agnes took Tom's face between her two hands, and with all the love of her heart shining in her eyes, exclaimed very earnestly, "But oh! dear Tom, whatever happens, always give me your confidence and your love; never try to deceive me; I love you better than any friend you have on earth."

Agnes Spencer never scolded and seldom reproved, excepting with a sorrowful look. "The way she controls that family is something marvelous," Mrs. Raymond had said; "it is all done by the mighty power of love." But it was a gentle, guiding power, and never exacting, whose restraints were not realized by the brothers and

sisters themselves, and so never resented, although it was molding their lives for heaven. "Very sweet and lovely," society called Agnes Spencer, but few understood the strength and nobleness of her character, or imagined the greatness of the work that she was doing in her own home with so much faithfulness and wisdom—a work that angels might envy.

That day Tom went off and gathered the loveliest flowers and ferns he could find, for his sister's room; all that day, and for many others, he was untiring in his efforts to show his affection by all manner of brotherly kindnesses and attentions.

The drowsy, midsummer days were flitting away swiftly; already at evening the cricket had commenced his sad, little requiem, and the grasshopper his mid-day hum; the thistledown floating in the air, the golden rod and aster by the wayside, all told that the fair summer was moving on with hurrying feet. Oh! linger we cry; do not hasten; the winter will be with us all too soon—the clouds, the rain and the snow—but she tarries not at our call. Like all other fair and beautiful things, she passes away from our sight.

Mansfield grew impatient of losing any more of the bright, sunny hours. Early Monday morning he was off on a little expedition of his own, as Robert had promised to go with Belle and Tom on a boating excursion.

"With your permission, I will join you, Mansfield," said Dr. Raymond, coming out on the piazza—fishing-rod in hand—just as Mansfield was starting.

"Come, and welcome, and more than welcome," Mansfield replied, for the young artist was only too glad of another long summer morning with Dr. Raymond for his companion; the enthusiastic man, whose eyes were so quick to see everything beautiful, whose heart was so attune to Nature's own, had a great charm for the poetic young artist. And it no longer annoyed Mansfield to hear Dr. Raymond recognizing God in everything—mountain and stream, bird and flower; he found himself watching and listening for such words, words which the young man knew were the sweet, natural outflow of a heart full to overflowing with love and devotion to the Father of all.

"I hope our friend, Bill Stryker, will make his appearance and show me some new trout

brooks," exclaimed Dr. Raymond, as they were walking rapidly down the hill. "By the way, Mansfield, he was in Sunday school, yesterday; I had quite a class, mostly of those I have hunted up among these hills."

"Nice thing for the boys; I hope they appreciate your teachings; but really, Dr. Raymond, it seems almost a sin for a man of your ability, to waste your strength over a set of ignorant country chaps like Bill Stryker; you came here to rest.

Dr. Raymond stopped by a rock that jutted out into the path, hitting it with his rod. "It is rough, hard rock, but if we were sure there was gold or silver in it, would it not pay to peck away at it until we found the treasure? The soul is the priceless treasure that we are trying to find in each of these boys and girls; they may be rough, dirty, and uncouth; the very intellect may be asleep, yet we know the soul is there—a something that will live when the beautiful world is 'rolled together like a scroll'; a soul for which Christ died. Think what it is, Mansfield, to lead a soul to Him, or even to arouse a sluggish mind. Why, my dear friend, there is no work that can compare with this, no aim so

glorious. You have yet to learn this joy; it will come to you some day. If you are in our city this winter—as I hope you will be—you must see something of our mission schools. I believe you would soon be as interested as Robert is. I cannot give much time to them when at home, my Sundays are so occupied, but up here in the country, I do enjoy teaching a class in Sunday school. I hope to get an influence over these boys that I have been teaching last season and this, that will tell upon all eternity. I shall help them in any way I can; I hope to help some of them to an education. Why, Mansfield, if you once take hold of this grand work, laboring with Christ for the salvation of souls, even your beloved profession will seem to you as being inferior employment.”

While Dr. Raymond was talking, the two gentlemen were striding away toward the grassy meadow, with its brook and willow trees. “I must get another study from that lovely spot,” Mansfield had said.

Dr. Raymond picked a daisy that grew in the path. “How pretty,” he exclaimed, “and see that bird soaring away; what a beauty! The world is full of beautiful things,” with a sweep

of his hand, "but if we could put them all in a balance, the soul of one poor, ignorant child would outweigh them all, for *these* shall all perish, but *that* shall live on through endless years."

"I expect, Dr. Raymond, that I have put a low estimate upon humanity; I mean the common herd as I have seen it in this country and abroad, but looked upon in your light, every human being, however lowly, is of infinite price. As my eyes are opened to see something of the worth of my own soul, I hope I may learn more about my fellowmen; but, oh! I am a slow scholar."

Bill Stryker and his dog "turned up," even as Dr. Raymond had hoped. The boy grasped Mansfield's easel, eager to help carry part of the load, and gladly followed the gentlemen to the meadow; he watched the artist arrange his things for work, evidently anxious to be honored again by a place in the picture, but Mansfield did not care for a second edition of the ragged jacket, torn hat, and nankeen pants. As soon as Mansfield was well interested in his work, Dr. Raymond and Bill started off after trout. After they had gone, Mansfield's interest in his

sketching flagged ; his thoughts would revert to the conversation with Dr. Raymond, as they came down the hill. He sat and lazily sketched some cows, and a horse, which were feeding in the pasture. Soon the animals gathered around him, as if anxious for human companionship, gazing at him with their large, gentle eyes. He rose and drove them away, but in a few moments they returned, as if attracted by his presence. All the time his thoughts were busy. "Thus, I have driven away my kind, doing nothing for their good."

How mean and selfish his life looked, compared with that of Dr. Raymond. He looked at the brush in his hand almost contemptuously. "If I were a minister, instead of a painter, I too, might do something in the world." Then there flashed into his mind like a revelation, the truth, "I ought to consecrate my brush to God," and with the thought, the bitter realization, "how can I work for Him, when He has no place in my heart? He wants the heart first. I am far from God and heaven ; between Him and my soul there is a great wall of sin and evil." Then an earnest cry went up—"O, God, take away my sins, give me thyself!" at once the answer came.

Alone in the meadow, with the little brook purling its sweet story in his ear, Henry Mansfield, dropping his brush, bowed his head and lifted his hat in reverence, not to the beautiful that glorified earth and sky that lovely summer day, but to the unseen Being who made it all. He looked beyond, and through Nature's fair face, into the face of Him who revealed Himself to his soul at that moment as "*my* Father and *my* God"—Henry Mansfield's first act of true worship. The joy of the thought, "He is mine and I am His, made his heart beat very fast. "At one with God, at peace with Him, sins all forgiven, soul saved through Jesus Christ my Lord." Could it be possible? He could not work, his heart was too full of rejoicing. He rose and paced back and forth in his agitation, then seated himself under a tree beside the murmuring brook, and looked up through the branches into the blue depths. He thought of his mother, and wondered if she knew; then she seemed to come to him, as she used to come to his bed when he was a little boy, stroking his curls, and speaking low, sweet words of prayer.

"Oh, mother! dear mother!" he exclaimed

softly, "I have been very wayward, and wandered far, but I am coming back. God has heard your prayers for your boy; He has watched over my stumbling feet all this long way, and now He is bringing me back to my Father's home. I see the open door, and Christ my Lord standing ready to welcome me home."

He wondered what had become of the weight he had been carrying on his heart for so many weeks—he could not remember for how long. "It is all gone; can it be possible that Jesus has taken it all away that I may go free?" he asked. He sat there a long time, his whole being filled with a strange, new joy; then he bowed his head on his hands and tried to pray, but it was mostly broken words of thanksgiving. "The long conflict is over, there is peace between my soul and God; how wonderful, how blessed! Dear Lord, I give myself to Thee; I am thine; take me just as I am, and make me what I ought to be. Dear Saviour, I bless Thee."

When Dr. Raymond returned to the field with a nice string of trout in his hand, Mansfield was nowhere to be seen. The easel stood there, and the white umbrella, but there was

little done on the canvas. "This is very strange; where is our artist?" asked Dr. Raymond.

The dog gave a sharp bark. "Oh! here he is," shouted Bill, "sitting under the trees."

"Holloa! Mansfield, taking a nap?" called out Dr. Raymond.

"No, not exactly," rising from his grassy seat with a face so shining that the Doctor wondered.

"You have been doing a little happy dreaming, I imagine. Do you know it is high time for us to be traveling homeward. You have not accomplished much this morning," glancing at the easel; "had any distracting company?"

"Oh, yes! company of the best kind, but not at all distracting. It does not matter if this picture is never done; it is all right," taking down his apparatus with the same happy look.

Dr. Raymond stood and watched him, greatly puzzled. Mansfield had planned to do so much that morning, and was usually so vexed with himself if he failed in carrying out his intentions. But a great work had been done that day; a wonderful picture had been painted by an unseen hand, one that would endure when

the greatest masterpieces of noted artists should crumble into dust ; on a human spirit the image of God had been renewed ; a strong will had yielded allegiance to the heavenly King ; a wandering child had returned to his Father's house with words of love and penitence.

Mansfield's heart was too full to talk of other things ; he walked along like one in a dream, while Dr. Raymond kept up a little conversation with the boy. Bill insisted upon going all the way home with them to carry part of the artist's paraphernalia. Mansfield came to himself enough to hand Bill a quarter, with a bright smile and a " Thank you, Bill ; you are a good chap."

" Shall I tell Dr. Raymond ? " he asked himself as he was walking silently homeward. " It may be that it is all imagination, there may be no real change ; but of one thing I am certain, God helping me, henceforth I live for Him."

After dinner Mansfield sat on the piazza with Dr. Raymond, and tried to tell this good friend of his thoughts and feelings out in the meadow that morning ; but he stammered, and feared he could not make himself understood. But Dr. Raymond caught his hand, exclaiming, in a

voice tremulous with deep feeling, "Ah, Mansfield, my boy, I know all about it; I have been watching for this happy change; I knew it could not be far distant. I rejoice over you as I would over a dear son."

CHAPTER XVI.

THAT afternoon there came up a sudden shower; the clouds gathered quickly, the wind roared with terrific fury through the trees, swaying them fearfully; then the torrents poured down, with thunder and lightning. The wanderers came rushing to the house for shelter from the storm. Robert Spencer, with Belle, Tom, and a few other young people, got in from their excursion just in time to "miss a good shower bath," as Tom declared. Many sat on the piazza—our little party among the number—watching the lightning playing all kinds of strange freaks in the sky; forked tongues of flame lighting up the heavy clouds with their fiery gleams; thunder—peal after peal, with deafening roar—shook the very house that stood upon the rock, alarming some, but adding to the grandeur.

After a time the thunder died away in low murmurs, the wind ceased, the dark clouds fled away, and light fleecy ones flecked the heavenly

blue ; a soft, gentle shower followed the pelting torrent, the sun shone out in the west, and then came Nature's smile—the beautiful rainbow. “And now comes the crowning glory, the bow of promise,” exclaimed Dr. Raymond as it appeared, “the promise of God, never to be broken.”

Mansfield's eyes brightened. “I, too, may claim that promise of mercy and grace,” he thought. “This glorious Being who speaks in the thunder, and rides upon the storm, is my God ; the one who created this beautiful world that I love, is my God forever, my reconciled Father. Jesus has taken away the sins that hid him from my sight.”

How sweet and fresh everything looked after the shower.

“Upon the earth the hand of God had lain ;
His benediction is the summer rain.”

Mansfield went out under the dripping trees, down the shady path, enjoying the perfume which the storm had exhaled from spruce and hemlock, his heart full of thankfulness and rejoicing. All his life he had loved all nature's sights and sounds, but never, as on that day, had he seen God in everything ; a glorious God

but also a loving father. Why had he gone all his life blind, he wondered? Even then he feared it might all be a mistake, that the old doubt and unrest might return at some time. "At one with God, blessed harmony, the harmony for which man's spirit was formed ; all my life I have been out of tune."

Mansfield hastened on down the hill, thinking that he would make a short call upon Ernest Saunders. This patient friend had often been in his mind during the day. He found Ernest in his usual place ; he, too, had been enjoying the storm. "Oh ! it was a glorious sight," he said, as he took Mansfield's hand. "Mother was afraid, but I told her that our heavenly father held the lightning in his grasp, and it could not touch us without His permission."

Mansfield seated himself by his friend's bedside, longing to speak of his newly found hope and joy, yet hardly knowing how to commence. But the keen eyes of this heaven-taught man were watching his face. "Mr. Mansfield, something good has come to you ;" then in a glad tone, "Have you sought and found the Saviour?"

"He has sought and found me, I think, I hope ; now I see that all these weeks I have

been fighting against Him, but to-day, I trust the battle ended. Yes, Saunders, I am His and He is mine. Oh! I have been just like the troubled sea; I have never known true rest until to-day; oh! the joy; will it last, Saunders, will He *stay* with me?"

"Stay with you? yes, forever. He will never go away, unless you drive him from your heart. O, Mr. Mansfield, how glad I am, it is almost too good to be true."

"It *is* almost too good, I only hope there is no mistake."

"Oh! there are no mistakes with God; you just cling to His promise."

"Now, Saunders, I want you to pray with me."

What a prayer, or rather thanksgiving, went up from that humble little room. Thanks that the dear, patient Saviour had waited so long and so persistently at the door of this heart, standing and knocking for weary weeks and years; that at last the lips had answered, "Come in," and the blessed One had entered to abide in this soul forever and forever. Then Ernest asked that this dear friend might be kept from sinning; made strong in every time of weakness,

and that God's peace might be his. This simple, earnest prayer, voiced the feelings of Henry Mansfield's heart, and helped to strengthen his faith. "I believe he can and will keep me," he thought. With Ernest's parting words ringing in his ears—"God says, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,'"—he walked back to the hotel.

Good Mrs. Raymond took his hand in both of hers, exclaiming softly, her eyes full of joyful tears, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee!" While a few evenings later, Mansfield had a talk with cousin Agnes, telling her of his newly found hope in Christ; his purpose to live for God. Then he learned, as never before, what a wise, true friend he had in Agnes Spencer, and how earnestly she had been praying for him all these weeks. "O, Cousin Henry, I have never doubted for a moment, that the light would break in upon your heart, and you would see Christ in all his loveliness," she exclaimed, with one of her bright smiles.

One evening that week, a little group in the parlor had a long discussion about the Sabbath. It was commenced by one of the gentlemen asking Dr. Raymond, "if he considered the little

entertainment on Sunday evening, as anything sinful?"

"Of course not in itself, but I did not think it proper for the Sabbath."

Then Mrs. Chapman asked, "if there was not such a thing as Christians being too strict about all these 'little matters;' if such strictness did not tend to drive young people away from churches, and prejudice them against religion; would not a little more liberty in minor things, be a wiser course?"

"My dear madam, I do not call the keeping of the Sabbath, a *little* matter. Then, could the young ask for much more liberty than they have in these modern days? We certainly must admit, that the tendency is to forget the Sabbath, or to put it on a par with other days, making no distinction between holy time and the rest of the week. If disregard for the day would win young hearts, then our churches ought to be better filled than they are."

"O, Dr. Raymond, I do not refer to open violations of the day; I do not approve of these any more than you do. I mean this being so very particular about what may be read or sung on the Sabbath. I must say, after your little

speech the other evening, I felt quite condemned, yet there are many in the house who could not see the harm of that little sacred concert; some of the young people think us very strict, to object to anything so pleasant and innocent."

Dr. Raymond looked sober, but asked pleasantly, "Why was the Sabbath appointed, what is its meaning, why was this gem set among the days of the week?"

"To give the world a rest," exclaimed Mr. Perrin, an energetic business man, connected with a large business firm in the city, who had come to the hills for a much needed vacation; an active christian, his Sundays, as well as week days, were busy hours. "I must say, that in the drive and turmoil of my life, I appreciate a *rest* day."

"Of course you do, and God intended you should have it. It was His wise plan that for man and beast there should be one day of rest among the seven. On that day He would have the human race 'free from care, from labor free,' but it was to be a rest in Him; the hands were to drop the implements of toil, that the soul might turn heavenward; every moment was set

apart from a common to a heavenly use ; while the body rested the soul was to mount upward. Now, whatever helps the soul on to God on His day is to be sought and prized, whatever hinders its progress is to be discarded ; it is forbidden. So all our reading, our singing, our conversation, and our thinking, is to be guided by this rule. The time is too valuable to be spent in secular reading, however innocent it may be for other days. In this light do you not see, Mrs. Chapman, that a purely secular entertainment, like that of last Sunday evening, is a breaking of the Sabbath ? ”

“ Well, Dr. Raymond, that is putting it all upon a very high plane,” said Mrs. Chapman. “ I fear none of us could live up to that standard, or if we could, it would make the Sabbath a day of bondage.”

“ Oh, no ! Mrs. Chapman, not a day of bondage, but the happiest day of the seven. If we, as Christians, believe what we profess, if we love the things of God with all our hearts, it must be a joy to us to have one day in the week devoted to the consideration of those things which we prize most highly. To have our reading and singing of a religious nature should not

be a hardship to one who loves the Lord, and has, perhaps, little time for such reading during the week, and naturally our thoughts will follow in the same current. I do not mean that there should be anything gloomy or sad in look or manner on God's day. In the family it should be a glad, social day, but not a worldly one. What more beautiful sight can earth afford than that of a whole family joining in songs of praise to the heavenly King, reading and studying God's Word, and calling the Sabbath a delight; thus using the hours for the highest purpose. God's purpose was to give the soul opportunity to prepare for its home above; to clothe itself in the robe of Christ's righteousness, so that when it is called to lay aside the cerements of earth, it may be fitly dressed to join the great family in heaven. I cannot see any bondage in this; but only a blessed privilege."

"Then, aside from the privilege, there is the duty," said Mr. Fenton, "'he that honoreth Me, I will honor.' Certainly God's dear children should never need to crowd in the things of earth to make the time pass pleasantly. A well spent Sabbath is, to me, the sweetest type imaginable of the Sabbath that knows no end."

“You have less temptations to break the Sabbath here, in the country, where everything is quiet and restful, than we do in the whirl and bustle of the city,” said Mr. Perrin. “Country people can get plenty of oxygen by just stepping out of doors; they need not stray off to get a sight of green fields, flowers, or a breath of invigorating air, as the poor in our large cities have to do.”

“But the farmer’s work is very exhausting and dulling to the spirit,” exclaimed Mr. Fenton, who was brought up on a farm; “he often finds himself inclined to drowse away the Sabbath hours, while the beauties around him are no novelty. Then Sundays are the only days the farmer’s boy or girl has for a ride, walk or visit. I imagine the temptations are about equal; over work cheats multitudes out of a Sabbath.”

“But you do not know how our city poor live,” persisted Mr. Perrin, “huddled together in wretched tenement houses; many of them honest, hard working men and women, who really want to do right; yet, I declare, you cannot blame them if they start for the country Sunday morning, and spend the day lying on

the grass, under the blue sky. You see it is their only chance to get a glimpse of God's beautiful world, to say nothing of getting the fresh air their very life demands."

"I must say," added Robert Spencer, "that in my city mission work I often feel that I cannot blame them if they do leave their miserable homes to spend the day in the country; going away from the filthy, narrow streets, with their heat and stiffling odors. What might be wrong for us, in our pleasant homes, surrounded by every comfort, may not be for them. I should not like to judge them. Certainly, any one who is posted on the subject must consider the Sunday question—for the poor in large cities—a difficult one."

"Yet there is the command," replied Mr. Fenton, "'to keep the day holy to the Lord.' I suppose it applies to them as well as to ourselves. We would not think of making an exception in their favor in regard to the other commandments, why should we excuse them for breaking this important one?"

"What you say is all true," answered Mr. Perrin; "yet, when you come to individual cases, it is a hard matter to decide. There are

young women in our mission school who are making a brave fight for bread and butter; some of them with others dependent upon their efforts. They are not strong; they work early and late. When they go to their homes, or abiding places, Saturday nights, they are utterly exhausted. Now, if they spend part of the Sabbath out in the country, and the rest of the time in bed, I have not the heart to say to them, 'You have committed a great sin; you have broken the Sabbath.' Mr. Perrin was very earnest and excited.

"Well, now," broke in Mr. Fenton, "it is all wrong; it is a burning shame that they should be so over-taxed that they are compelled to spend Sunday in this way. Employers ought not to impose upon their employés in this matter; the working classes ought to have their Saturday afternoons for recreation, so that they may use their Sundays as God intended."

"I am with you there, Mr. Fenton," continued Mr. Perrin. "That has been a pet idea of mine for many years. In many of our large stores this is done; yet in many kinds of business it seems an impossibility. Many men are doing business upon such narrow margins, that

to close their establishments for half a day each week would mean ruin to themselves and others ; they could not stand the loss. If the result is that the mill stops entirely, and the wheels stand still, the workmen suffer even more than their employers. It is all a muddle to me. I have thought it over and over, but it does not clear itself ; there is something wrong somewhere. I am sure that the good Lord never intended that half of his creatures should be cheated out of the real good of their Sundays. The way many of these poor people are ground down by that cruel monster—*necessity*—is something fearful. If they can keep soul and body together, and manage to *exist*, it is all they can do. One that sees much of it cannot wonder that they break the Sabbath. The only wonder is that there is anything sweet or good left in their lives or hearts.”

“I am very sure of *one* thing,” said Dr. Raymond : “they will never be judged as we shall be, when God ‘requires’ His misspent, wasted and profaned Sabbath days. It is indeed a troublesome question. I too, with Mr. Perrin, have given this matter a great deal of anxious thought. I hope and trust that the day will

come when his pet idea will be carried out, and the working-classes will have their Saturday afternoons for recreation and their Sundays for God's worship and service. It certainly seems feasible. Surely, in this great, prosperous country, business ought to be able to sacrifice as much as this for the good of the laboring classes.

“But I do think that we are inclined to forget that feeding the *soul* often strengthens the *body*. Can we not imagine how the sweet music, the voice of prayer, and the blessed word from God's book, to be heard in our churches, might cheer and comfort a man or woman who came up from all the discords, the cares, the moil and toil of a hard life, lifting the poor, tired soul above it all, and resting it, for one day in the seven, on the bosom of the Saviour? To hear Jesus' words of love and promise, to have the eyes pointed to a land where all is joy, peace and rest, must be like a refreshing draught to thirsty lips. If these weary, discouraged ones can realize, even for one day of the week, that trouble and sorrow are short and fleeting, heaven near and eternal, how it must strengthen them for the struggle of life, giving new courage

and hope—for ‘is there not something blessed beyond?’ And is there any medicine like hope for both soul and body—the very best invigorator—the very elixir of life?

“How many desolate ones, how many heavy-hearted ones there are among the poor, who need Christ. Their only time for hearing the good news of a Saviour is on the Sabbath day. Their souls need Him more than their bodies need rest and fresh air. They must have their true Sabbaths in some way. We all know that if the mind is at rest is joyful and happy, it has its renewing effect upon the body. The poor, of all people, cannot afford to lose the blessing of a spiritual Sabbath.

“Then I think that we often magnify unduly the good effects of these Sunday excursions into the country;—boats and cars are crowded; all is noise and excitement; a breath of pure air, a glimpse of green fields and flowers, hardly compensates for all the attendant weariness.”

“Yes; there you are right, Dr. Raymond,” said Mr. Perrin. “I often see these poor people dragging themselves home, after such a toilsome day, looking anything but happy and refreshed. I don’t know but a quiet walk to an up-town

church, where comforting truth is to be heard, might do them more real good. But they ought to have Saturday afternoon, and Sunday too. I hope that day will come."

"We will all say 'amen' to that wish!" exclaimed Dr. Raymond.

"But where are the grand up-town churches where the poor are made welcome?" asked Mr. Fenton quizzically. "The poor had the gospel preached to them in Christ's time; but that can hardly be said of modern pulpits in large cities."

"They have it in Dr. Raymond's church," spoke up Robert Spencer quickly. "All are welcome there, however plain the dress, and they are not given the back seats of the house."

"Dr. Raymond's church must be an exception, I think. I fear there are not many of that kind," persisted Mr. Fenton.

"I am afraid Mr. Fenton is prejudiced against the city; I don't believe there are many city churches where the poor are crowded out," protested Mr. Perrin.

"I hope it is better than I fear," laughed the young minister. "If so, the millenium is nearer than I supposed."

CHAPTER XVII.

DURING this long conversation in one of the parlors, Henry Mansfield had been sitting on the piazza in a retired corner, enjoying the luxury of his own happy thoughts. He was glad to sit there quietly, watching the new moon and the twinkling stars, listening to the sweet, plaintive note of the whip-poor-will, and best of all, realizing the blessed fact, that for the first time in his life, there was peace between his soul and God. How wonderful it seemed that this joy and rest in the infinite One, should be his. During the weeks spent with Cousin Agnes and the Raymonds, this peace had been the blessing for which he had longed, a blessing which he had almost envied those dear friends in possessing. "And now it is mine through Jesus Christ, my Lord. How utterly worthless everything else looks in comparison," was his happy thought.

Mrs. Lansing, and a merry little company, came out on the piazza. From Mrs. Lansing's words, Mansfield imagined what was the subject

of the conversation going on in the parlor. He knew very well, that her "innocent fun," at which her companions were laughing, had an under current of biting sarcasm aimed at his true good friend, Dr. Raymond. Her voice and laugh sounded very musical and silvery, but they did not tempt him from his corner. He wondered how he could ever have enjoyed the society of this trifling woman, who seemed now so worldly, and so false.

After a time, Mrs. Raymond and Agnes came out on the piazza for a promenade. They soon discovered Cousin Henry in his quiet retreat.

"Oh! how is it that you have hidden yourself away?" exclaimed Mrs. Raymond. "I have been wondering as to your whereabouts, this evening. Are you star and moon-gazing?"

"Yes, and thanking the good Father for all his love to me."

Mrs. Raymond laid her hand caressingly on his shoulder: "how glad I am for you, we will not disturb your happy thoughts."

"You and Cousin Agnes cannot disturb them; you are just in unison with my mood; indeed, you two, and Dr. Raymond, were just in my mind. Now let me join you in a walk," and

giving an arm to each, they sauntered up and down the broad veranda.

Suddenly, Belle Spencer left the group surrounding Mrs. Lansing, and accosted Agnes with the question, "O, Aggie, would you sing in the parlor, if you were me, this evening? Mrs. Lansing is urging me to do so."

Then Mrs. Lansing came up and added her request. "Do advise your sister to sing, and give us a treat."

"Why, certainly sing, Belle, if you will not be disturbing those gentlemen sitting near the piano."

"Oh! that long prosy talk should come to an end," said Mrs. Lansing. "They will be glad of such a pleasant interruption, I am sure."

"Cousin Belle, please sing the song you sang Sunday evening, 'Come unto Me,' " was Mansfield's request.

Belle gave Cousin Henry an astonished glance, then looked up at Mrs. Lansing. There was a curl on her lip, as she answered, "O, sing it certainly, Miss Belle, if that is Mr. Mansfield's choice; gentlemen must be humored in their little fancies," laughing. "But I should think that something else would be more appropriate

for this evening, Mr. Mansfield. I supposed hymns were more suitable for Sunday singing."

"I should say that a hymn is just as appropriate for *this* evening, as a love song for Sabbath evening," retorted Mansfield, rather sharply, at which hit, Mrs. Lansing winced a little, but led the way into the parlor, without further remark. "Ladies and gentlemen, I suppose you will not object to a little good music," approaching the company near the piano, and addressing them in her most charming manner. Being assured that they would be most happy to listen, Belle sang several songs very sweetly, the first one being the hymn that Cousin Henry had requested; she wondered at his preference, for she did not suppose that his tastes were religious. Could it be that the Saviour's words of invitation had been a message to Cousin Henry's heart?" Belle Spencer had just commenced the Christian life. She had not yet discovered the worth of her fine voice in winning souls to Christ. She had been wishing and longing for some opportunity to show her love for Jesus, and here was work she could do for Him, of which she had not dreamed. She was a little timid, and had a little dread of mak-

ing herself ridiculous in Mrs. Lansing's eyes, for Belle, like all the other young people, felt the spell of that strong influence.

But there was a vein of sturdy independence in Belle Spencer, where right and wrong were concerned. She sang the blessed words that evening with wonderful feeling and expression; sang them as Agnes had never heard her sing anything before, so sweetly and touchingly.

Even Mrs. Lansing was astonished. "How beautiful she sang it," she exclaimed to Dr. Raymond, who happened to be standing near, "she seemed inspired."

"She did, indeed; and how beautiful the words are themselves; Christ's words to weary hearts. Do you never long for that rest, Mrs. Lansing?" very earnestly.

"Dr. Raymond, I am perfectly happy. Why should you take it for granted that I am not?" was the careless reply, but an expression on her handsome face, belied the words.

Mansfield went up to Belle, as she ceased singing. "Oh, thank you, Cousin Belle; I love that song; those blessed words came home to my heart the other evening as no song ever did before, in all my life."

“Why, Cousin Henry, is that true? I did not think that you would care.”

How little we know what heart will be reached by the words we sing. Some soul that is hesitating, or in the darkness, may find strength and light through the sweet ministry of song.

After this first piece every one was in a quiet mood, but Mrs. Lansing soon called for others, until Belle had given them the most that she knew. “But not one equals the first,” Cousin Henry declared.

That same week a day had been appointed for the long planned trip to the distant lake, another of those all day excursions that were Tom’s delight. “I am going to invite Mrs. Lansing to accompany us,” Dr. Raymond declared at the table. Mansfield and Agnes looked annoyed, but Tom exclaimed, “Oh, that’s jolly! we’ll have a lively time.”

“I promised the lady, some time ago, that she should have an opportunity to go if she chose,” Dr. Raymond explained.

But Mrs. Lansing declined with profuse thanks, to Tom’s great regret. “I tell you she’s nice out in the woods, she is so full of fun, and she knows about everything; she can tell you

such interesting things and such capital stories, only I don't mean to let her coax me off again with her on Sunday," was Tom's opinion given to Agnes in private.

So our little party went as before—"eight, all told"—just enough to nicely fill the big wagon. Again the morning was glorious, the air deliciously sweet, although the haze of departing summer softened the landscape. Belle and Tom were in their gayest mood; they liked Mrs. Lansing's company, but they did not need her assistance in having a good time.

"A jolly load are we," shouted Tom as they started off, waving his hat to those on the piazza. But no heart in the little company was lighter, or more truly happy, than that of Henry Mansfield. The beautiful world was like a different place to him since he had learned to see God in everything, and to know that this God was his Father and Friend.

The lake was a charming sheet of water, with pebbly beach, woody shores, and many little bays jutting into the land, forming sheltered coves where one could drift around in the boat and sleep, dream, or fish. It proved to be a day of rare enjoyment to our party. "A whole

long day on the water, what fun!" Tom exclaimed, more than once. At almost any point they could row up to the banks and find cool, pleasant spots to rest under the trees, the pine needles forming a nice carpet. Mrs. Raymond and Agnes found such a sheltered place, where they spent the middle of the day, while the gentlemen were fishing and sketching; and Belle and Tom—with Grace in the boat—were rowing around into the coves, looking for sweet water lilies, which were hard to find so late in the season. But, after a time, all grew tired, and were glad of a shade from the sun and a good lunch.

After lunch Mansfield and Robert Spencer wandered off from the rest to a pretty little spot in the woods, and had a free talk.

Intimate as these two young men had been in the past, Mansfield had never spoken one word to his cousin of the struggle going on in his own mind. Mansfield thought his cousin Robert harsh and severe that first Sunday morning in the mountains, so after that kept his thoughts and feelings to himself. Dr. Raymond understood it all, but this cousin who

shared his daily work had no idea of the change being wrought in Mansfield's heart and life.

But now Mansfield gave Robert his confidence, telling him of all the unhappiness of the past weeks, the longing for something higher and better than anything in the past, the desire for the peace and joy that shone out in the very faces of Dr. and Mrs. Raymond and Cousin Agnes. He spoke of the serious thoughts awakened by his peril at the time of the fire, and of the influence Ernest Saunders had exerted over him by his submission and patience, his beautiful life being like a sermon to him, so that he had gone from that humble room many times, astonished and almost envious of the simple faith, trust and unbounded joy of this smitten one.

And, last of all, he told of the morning in the meadow, when the weight of sin rolled from his back, the scales fell from his eyes, and the light from the Cross streamed into his soul.

"How sweet it was, Rob, that I should find Him out there among His beautiful works, that I have worshiped and loved, making them my god instead of the glorious Creator. And now, I shall paint mountains and lakes, trees and sky,

with new zest and enthusiasm. I have consecrated my brush and pencil to the service of Christ, my King, and you and I will be friends and brothers as of old, gladly working for the same great end."

Robert Spencer was very much surprised and delighted, yet he looked sober. "I am so glad for you," he exclaimed at last, "and sorry for myself. I fear I was vexed, as well as disappointed, when you came home, and I realized how differently we felt about religious things. I could not understand why you should show such bitter opposition to everything religious; but I did not give you any help nor any true sympathy. I thought that you were completely spoiled by your two years residence in foreign lands. I fear I had little patience with you, and little faith in God's power to open your eyes;" then, very earnestly, "May God teach me a lesson in Christian forbearance."

"Oh, Rob! it is not strange you felt as you did; the only wonder is that I did not drift off into infidelity; a loving Father must have sent me here to save me from such a fate. You see, while I was abroad, every influence tended that way; I soon lost all practical faith in the Bible,

and was going farther and farther astray. I really think, now, that one great snare to me was my persistent breaking of the Sabbath. I had little reverence for the day, and was just ready to adopt the fashion of those foreign cities, of ignoring the Sabbath altogether. How differently I shall feel about that one thing. I do believe if there is one thing that I shall love and prize it will be that blessed day; I shall count it 'My Pearl' among the days, even as Cousin Agnes does. If there is one thing that I shall always regret, it will be my misspent Sabbaths."

"Have you written to your father of your change of purpose?" asked Robert.

"No, not yet; I have not had time. Then I must wait a little to be sure that it is a genuine change. I shall go to see him soon and seek his pardon. The poor old man! he has been a severe father, but I have been a wilful, disobedient son. I have given him little affection; we were so different, we could not understand one another; but he thought he was doing right. I will try to make his last days happy ones."

That was a long confidential talk between

Henry Mansfield and Robert Spencer. From that time there were no more estrangements between the two; they were one ever after in heart, sympathy and aim.

They were interrupted by Tom, who appeared from behind an ambush of underwood, and commenced striking them with branches. "Come, you lazy fellows, you have talked long enough; we are all waiting; we are going round the lake. You don't suppose that Dr. Raymond and I can steer and row two boats, do you? It takes several of us to get Aunt Maggie safely seated in one."

The young men started at once. Spencer looked at his watch; "I declare! we have been here over an hour."

"I should think you had; two or three, I guess. We thought you must be lost. Come, hurry up now, we want all our time."

And, indeed, they did need their time, as the afternoon was waning, while the lovely lake had not been half explored. The water was smooth and beautiful, with hardly a ripple on its surface; the surrounding woods and hills were reflected in the clear mirror with all the distinctness of reality; Grace declaring "the banks in

the water are brighter and prettier than the real ones."

Belle and Grace, in spite of large sun-hats, were burned in faces and necks; hands and arms too had suffered, for they had kept them in the water a good part of the time. "O, Aggie," cried Grace, "just take off your gloves and put your hands in the water, it is so soft and warm; it's just fun to let your hands float along behind the boat; you just try."

"Oh! you keep still there, you midget," shouted Tom; "you'll pitch yourself and us too, into the lake, if you don't sit still."

Mrs. Raymond gave one of her rippling laughs. "Tom does not charge *me* to keep my seat, he knows I would not move for a fortune."

Then Belle wanted to try rowing their boat, and succeeded in turning it round and round, to Tom's great amusement. "It takes a girl to row now, don't it?"

Agnes sat quietly, the very picture of content. "Let me try my skill," she exclaimed suddenly; "I used to know how to row." She took the oars, and with a few light strokes that sent the boat rapidly forward, soon proved to Tom's astonishment, that a girl *can* row, and very finely.

But she was out of practice and was soon tired. "I have not the old muscle and strength, and must yield to stronger hands," she said laughingly," but some day, Tom, perhaps I can beat you at a race."

Perhaps nothing that happened that day, gave Tom and Robert more pleasure, than this little episode, for it showed that sister Agnes was getting back some of her old strength and spirit.

Everything was so quiet and lovely, nothing to disturb the stillness, excepting the occasional call of a bird and the music of the dipping oars. They rowed into a charming little bay. "Now let us drop the oars and just float for a few moments," suggested Dr. Raymond. Then they sat and listened to the rippling of the water against the sides of the boat.

"Now is the time for music ; Belle, you sing," was Dr. Raymond's next suggestion, and Belle broke out in her rich sweet voice, in a little boating song, Robert adding the accompaniment of his flute. At once they discovered that there was a very fine echo.

Then Belle sang "Twickenham Ferry," with its "O-hoi-ye-ho," and echo repeated the clear call ; it was just the piece for a fine effect.

Grace's eyes were wide open. "O, Aggie; there must be a great spirit up there among the hills; it repeats every word." As they rowed around in different parts of this beautiful sheet of water, they found the echo in many places; sometimes they all joined in the singing. Then Agnes and Belle sang a duet, and they noticed that the echo of Agnes's alto, reached their ears after that of Belle's soprano; the high tones seemed to travel faster than the low ones, but no one could answer Tom's eager question—"What can make the difference?"

The sun was sinking behind the hills, casting bright gleams on the placid water. "Now start some sweet hymn before we leave this lovely lake," was Dr. Raymond's last request. Mansfield suggested that it be "Jesus, Lover of my soul," exchanging a glance with Agnes, for he had never forgotten the story she had told in Ernest Saunders' room. So the sweet words of that hymn, which has comforted so many hearts, floated out on the evening air. Mansfield remembered how unhappy and full of turmoil his heart was that Sabbath afternoon, while Agnes and Saunders seemed so full of joy and peace. But that evening he could sing the words with

all his soul, looking up lovingly into the face of his Saviour.

They left this gem of a lake with regret, Tom declaring that he had spent the happiest day of his life. "Aloha!" he shouted, as they stood on the shore just before leaving, and echo repeated the word "Aloha—love to you"—the Hawaiian word of salutation and farewell—was a sweet one for parting, Mansfield thought, as he listened to the echo. It was a beautiful picture that the happy party carried away with them from this last sight.

"The lake lay with the sheen on it,
Of day's last look serene on it;
And round its rim in the gloaming dim,
The shades of the low hills leaned on it."

Such pictures photographed on the memory, we can save for winter use, for days when everything without is dark and gloomy, cheering our hearts with a vision of summer brightness and beauty, sweet pictures that never grow dim.

A ride home in the moonlight closed this day of delight; another one added to the many they had enjoyed among these hills. They returned loaded with spoils—"treasures"—Grace called them; pretty stones, vines and flowers, and best

of all, exquisitely lovely water lilies with their hearts of gold and snowy petals, wrapped in the deep green of the calyx, some half open, others still in bud. Belle and Grace had adorned the hats of the company with wreaths, making them look quite picturesque. The gentlemen's "treasures" were the fine fish they carried home, for it had not been a day of "fisherman's luck." "Rob has saved the choicest and best of everything for Miss Wright," said Tom; "he never forgets our lady at home," with a sly glance at Dr. Raymond.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Who can measure the joy of him who has groped in darkness for years, and suddenly looks up and finds no clouds between him and the face of his God? We all know what it is to have earthly clouds break and scatter. Perhaps some loved one over whom we have been watching, is restored to life and health, or some straying one brought back to safe paths, some financial trouble removed, or some great danger averted. Over every life hang dark clouds at times, which, when they flee away and the sun shines out, the heart is filled with a joy and thanksgiving that cannot be expressed in words.

But of all joy that can come to a soul, is there any to compare with that of sins forgiven? With some the change is so gradual, that they can never name the time when they made their peace with God, and others—true lovely Christians—never taste the joy in *this* world, walking all their lives long in darkness; great will be their astonishment and delight, when—it may

be not until they reach the heavenly city—the light of God's love and mercy shall flood their souls.

But there are many to whom this divine illumination comes suddenly, like a revelation from the skies. After years of rebellion and sin, of longing and unrest, at length the Saviour's voice is heard, His blessed invitation is accepted, the mystery of redemption is revealed; then there bursts upon the soul a rapture of joy that is beyond compare. The prodigal flies to his Father's arms; the wandering sheep comes back from the "mountains, bleak and cold," to the safe and happy fold; all the sinful, bitter past is forgiven. Temptations will come afterwards, and battles must be fought; but in these first glad hours all is rest and peace.

"Why may not the Christian always live on this high plane?" we ask. Perhaps it is not possible; perhaps it is not best. Still, if his faith were more simple—like a little child's—he might ever be kept so near to the heart of God that sin and sorrow could not destroy his happiness.

Henry Mansfield's heart was full of this new joy, as he sat in his usual place on the piazza

before breakfast that next Sunday morning ; a joy that he could not express to his dearest friend ; but it could be read in his shining face. He was watching the mountains and clouds, noticing every varied and delicate effect of sun and shadow, differing tints and colors of fields and hill sides, or feasting his eyes upon the far away view of distant blue hills, of which he never tired. He saw it all with the poetic, enthusiastic soul of a true artist, even as he ever had ; but there was a new beauty in Nature to him that quiet Sabbath morning. He saw *God* in those glorious works ; he heard His voice speaking to him in every sweet sound ; the glad cry of his heart went up—"O God, Thou art *my* God ; I bless and praise Thee !"

Robert Spencer was sitting beside him, as he was that first Sunday morning after their arrival at the mountains. The two often improved Sabbath morning for the quiet enjoyment of the scene from the piazza, for on that morning the inmates of the house slept later than usual, so the artists could be undisturbed.

Just before breakfast time Agnes and Grace appeared, Grace taking her usual seat on her brother's lap for her morning kiss.

“Do you remember my first Sabbath on this piazza, Cousin Agnes?” asked Mansfield, looking up into her happy face.

Agnes answered with a beaming smile, “Oh, yes! the one with the glorious sunrise.”

“And you have on that very same pin, with the lost pearl restored. I am glad you have found your pearl; glad you happened to wear the pin this morning. And I, too, have found my lost pearl; this is my first Christian Sabbath. I cannot tell you how blessed it seems. I understand now all that your object lesson meant to teach. How could I ever have been willing to spend my precious Sabbath hours as I did?”

“Do not mar them now by vain regrets,” said Agnes cheerfully. “The Jews were commanded not to bear burdens on the Sabbath. Dropping every burden for one day of the week is a good rule for us, as well as for them. We must let nothing rob us of our joy this blessed resurrection day.”

“I was reading about that this morning. ‘The first day of the week, very early in the morning, before the rising of the sun.’ I think that I shall always want to be up early in the

morning on Sunday. I love to watch the dawning of any day ; the beauty and glory always pay me for rising with the birds, but God's day will be different from any other. If I am ever beguiled into sleeping away the morning hours, it will not be those of the Sabbath. Cousin Agnes, do you know I have a Bible that belonged to my mother. This morning I found some of her pencil marks in it ; I see she loved this day, as you do. But, Cousin Agnes, why are so many church members so careless about it ? It seems to be a time for sleep or amusement to some."

"Why, with some it is their only opportunity for a good long sleep. Now you and I can take *our* extra nap almost any day," laughing. Then very gently and earnestly, "We have to answer only for ourselves, Cousin Henry ; we cannot judge for others."

That was a happy day to Henry Mansfield ; "crowded full of blessedness," as he expressed it to Dr. Raymond.

At the morning service in the parlor, Dr. Raymond again referred to the day of days, urging upon God's dear children a more conscientious regard for its claims, a true under-

standing of its meaning and obligations, lest they fail to obtain the promised blessing, quoting Herbert's lines—

“ ‘ On Sundays heaven's door stands ope,
Blessings are plentiful and rife,
More plentiful than hope.’ ”

His words were free from all uncharitableness, but faithful and earnest. He spoke of the temptations to travelers in foreign lands to ignore holy time, and the sad results that often followed, in loss of spiritual strength and joy, so that the soul sat “crippled and dumb, when it should mount up and sing.” In closing, he asked earnestly, “Shall we wound the heart of our risen Lord and Saviour by forgetting Him on *this*, His blessed day?”

“Dr. Raymond puts everything on such high ground,” remarked Mrs. Chapman, “that one does not like to contradict him, even if one is not entirely convinced.”

Mansfield listened intently. “I see now,” was his thought, “why true Christians love the Sabbath; the mystery is solved. Saunders is right in saying ‘the more we love God, the more we shall enjoy His day.’” In church that day Mansfield heard as with new ears; the plain

sermon was neither dull nor stupid ; the simple prayers seemed sweet and fervent ; while his soul rose to heaven in the hymns of thanksgiving and praise ; the little chapel became the temple of the glorious King. Another restless spirit had found " the peace that passeth understanding ; " another soul could join the choir of earth and heaven, that sings the wonders of redeeming love. Did not the angels rejoice ?

" Come into the Sunday School," said Dr. Raymond to Mansfield after church, and the young artist went, and taking a seat near Dr. Raymond's class, added another to his interested listeners. At the close of the lessons Mr. Perrin gave some thrilling incidents connected with his city mission work. Mansfield heard with amazement. The picture of the suffering and poverty, the ignorance and sin in large cities, which Mr. Perrin drew so vividly, was a new one to Mansfield, one that the artist could hardly have imagined ; he had always kept himself so far away from the poor, and knew so little of their needs. The atmosphere of culture and refinement in which he had lived was so different ; he had such a horror of rags and filth ; why should he trouble himself to inquire

into the wants of those whose surroundings were so far from pleasing and artistic? That he owed his fellow men anything, or was in duty bound to reach out a helping hand to raise them from their degradation, he had never supposed.

But as Mr. Perrin was speaking there flashed into his mind a vision of the unutterably selfish life he had been leading without putting forth one effort for the souls of others. "All engrossed with my own pursuits," he thought, "monopolizing even my Sabbath hours for my own work, my end and aim in life to cultivate 'his Majesty—myself;' what an ignoble existence! I am glad that God has shown me a nobler object in living."

The gifted young painter looked with admiration upon Mr. Perrin, a plain, unassuming business man, of limited education, and destitute of any particular genius. "Yet he has done splendid work in the world for God and man; while I, with all my opportunities, have been utterly useless," was Mansfield's mental conclusion.

As they were walking homeward, Mansfield said to Dr. Raymond, "Do you remember some things you have said to me about work for God?"

Every word is true ; I see it all now. I have never done one stroke of good, honest work for Him in all my life ; I have lived and worked for self. Now—God helping me—I will have a higher, more unselfish aim. Show me what I can do ; give me some work for God and humanity.”

“As soon as you get back to the city, Mansfield, you take a class of street boys in our mission, and work for them and their families—if they have homes, as many of them have not—you will soon be greatly interested. Make a beginning by coming into this Sunday School next week and taking a class, if there is one without a teacher.”

“Oh ! Dr. Raymond, I cannot teach others so soon ; I need teaching myself ; I must wait until my own feet stand firmer.”

“But you can tell others of your newly found Saviour, can you not ?”

“I suppose I can do that, and I long to do it, but fear I can never make a good teacher of children, especially among the poor. I do hate dirt and filth, and fear that I could not help showing my disgust in my manner. You have

a happy way with common people, Dr. Raymond, that I could never attain ; it is a gift."

"You would not find much filth in this country school ; it takes a city mission school to bring out the unwashed, and unkempt," laughed Dr. Raymond, then added very earnestly, "I know, Mansfield, how fastidious all your tastes are, but the great work of Christ was among the humble poor. His Sabbath work was often one of healing and help for the lowly. Are you not willing to follow in his footsteps, even if you must take up a cross?"

"I certainly want to do something for Him. All this week I have been asking, 'How can I show my love?' I have thought of many ways, but this one—going down into the depths—has not been among them. I long to use my brush and pencil in His service ; these are my implements of labor. And I do so wish that I could redeem my Sabbaths from waste, making some amends for the many I have misspent. But really, Dr. Raymond, is teaching a few dirty, ragged children, the best way of spending holy time? Are there not other ways in which we could use the hours, that would have a more elevating effect upon our own souls?"

“Ah! there you are again, Mansfield, making your old mistake. You forget, my dear fellow, that every one of these poor little waifs has a soul, a priceless immortal soul. God does not look at the *outward*, and His servants must not. The marching order is, ‘Go tell *all*;’ we must not stop to cavil, nor to choose, but be ready to ‘do whatever our hands find to do. And, Mansfield, when once you become interested in this glorious work for human souls—any, all souls, even the most degraded—you will love it, and think it a far nobler calling than painting the most beautiful landscape imaginable. I know of no better way of spending a part of the Lord’s blessed day, nothing that draws our own spirits nearer to God and heaven, than laboring with Christ to rescue the lost and perishing. I almost envy you—a young man full of life and strength, with long years stretching out before you, in which to work for Christ. Commence at once, take hold earnestly of some form of Christian effort. The lower down in the scale of humanity, the more Christ-like the effort. I know of nothing more directly available for you, than Sunday school mission work. Commence your Christian life by giving part of every Sab-

bath to labor for souls. As for gifts, pleasant manners and the like, I will risk all that, you have them hidden away; just cultivate those which God has bestowed upon you and you will succeed. I can imagine you surrounded by a company of bright little urchins, winning their attention and hearts in a few Sundays."

Dr. Raymond spoke very enthusiastically, while Mansfield listened with a very earnest face. "Dr. Raymond!" he exclaimed; "if that is the work which you think I can do, and should attempt, I will take hold of it this winter with all my might."

"Good, Mansfield! I like to hear you talk like that. Why, the city is full of opportunities where you can put your strong young shoulders to the wheel, and do noble work for Christ and your fellow-men. We Christians do not always appreciate this privilege as we should. If everyone who has the strength, would only give a few hours of each Sabbath day to earnest effort for the salvation of men, think what might be accomplished in a lifetime. I do not mean the hours needed for worship, rest, or reading, but a part of that time which is so liable to be frittered away thoughtlessly."

“Thank you, Dr. Raymond,” said Mansfield, as they separated. “I did not suppose that there was much that I could do in *this* direction, but I see my mistake. I will make a beginning with the first opportunity; my Sunday afternoons shall be sacredly devoted to this service.”

A few hours of His day sealed unto Him whom our souls love, joyfully given to labor for Him, will He not accept the offering and crown our work of devotion with success? It may cost us effort and self denial, but our Saviour counted not the toil and weariness, when he came to save the lost. Well might He have claimed His Sabbath rest, but even those blessed days were spent feeding and healing the hungry, diseased souls and bodies of men. And shall we refuse to give a few hours of holy time? The interesting religious reading, the sweet intercourse with family and friends, the rest and meditation may have to be curtailed, but all these will be ours through all eternity; only *now* can we work to save the sinner for whom Christ died; eternity is long, but earthly life is short.

With many, Sunday is the only day when they can have a little time to give to direct work

for Jesus ; shall it not be gladly given ? The days, perhaps years, will come when pain and weakness will hold us prisoners in quiet rooms ; days when we cannot go up to God's courts to worship, nor out into the highways to seek the lost and wandering ones. Then how precious will seem the years when we had the health and strength to labor for our King. But, alas for us ! if in those days of helplessness and suffering, we must bear the added burden of remorse, as we recall our wasted Sabbaths and lost opportunities, mourning that the good we might have done is all undone, that our talents have been unused and that there are no stars to shine in our crown.

O, fellow Christian, let us awake to the work that God has given us to do in the world, doing it *now*, before the night cometh.

O, young Christian, commence now to labor for Christ, if you would have your whole life filled with blessedness. Take the poor ignorant little children by the hand and lead them to Jesus. The world is full of sin and sorrow. Go out to it with all the hope, courage and enthusiasm of your youthful days—your very *presence* may bring gladness—speak to it of heaven, point

it to the Saviour—the Sun of Righteousness—who can carry brightness to darkened homes, who can cleanse and deliver every sin-bondaged one.

CHAPTER XIX.

MANSFIELD was sitting on the piazza that afternoon, when Agnes and Grace started out for their Sunday call upon Ernest Saunders. "May I join you?" he asked. "I cannot let this day end without a glimpse of Saunders' patient, joyful face." Grace carried a basket of fruit, and Agnes a little book of sacred poems, containing some little gems that she had promised to read to Ernest.

"I have been thinking about you all day, Mr. Mansfield," was Ernest's greeting, "and rejoicing in your joy. I know just what a delightful day this must have been to you. Do you not begin to understand what that means, 'call the Sabbath a delight?' "

"Yes, Saunders, it has been a day of delight to me—a wonderful day. I hope it has been a pleasant one to you."

Ernest looked up with a sweet light in his eyes. "Yes; rest from sorrow, rest from sin, blessed rest in the Lord."

Mansfield glanced at Agnes, then at Ernest, remembering how he had longed for this spirit-rest that first time he called at the cottage. "And now it is mine," he thought. He understood, by blessed experience, what it is to 'rest in the Lord.' Mansfield remembered, too, how he had wondered, that first Sabbath, at the patience of this sufferer, and thought—"It must be a craven spirit that is willing to lie here so helpless for years." But he wondered no longer; the young artist had discovered the source of this quiet joy; like Grace's spring from the rocks, it was an unfailing fountain, sending forth living waters, and those who drank thirsted no more.

The rays of the declining sun were streaming in at the open door, without all was peace; the tinkling of a cow-bell, the evening calls of the birds, were the only sounds that broke the stillness, and within all was peace. Agnes' voice—reading some beautiful words of comfort—was very sweet and quieting. One little poem that she read—"An Open Door"—touched Mansfield's heart deeply; it was his own experience; verily he had learned that "God's is *never* a fast

shut gate ;” surely the last lines were the language of his own heart :

“He made *me* willing to hear His voice,
And ’twas He that taught me to love His name
And He brings a light which no shade can dim,
When He dwells in me, and I in Him.”

At Ernest’s request, Grace sang one of her pretty Sunday school hymns, in her sweet childish voice, all joining in the chorus. “Mr. Mansfield, will you please make a prayer?” was the next request. At first Mansfield hesitated, then kneeling down, offered his first petition in the presence of others ; for a moment he stumbled and halted, then forgetting himself and his listeners, he besought the Heavenly Father to bless this dear friend, “who had suffered so much, and borne it all so patiently,” bespeaking for him the choicest gifts God would bestow, and thanking the Lord for all the beautiful lessons he had been enabled to teach by his life of joyful trust and submission. As Mansfield rose from his knees, he took the thin wasted hand and raised it tenderly to his lips, then turned and left the room. Ernest’s face was radiant, but the tears stood in his eyes, as Agnes bade him good night.

The day closed with sacred music in the parlor; one hymn after another was called for, until the evening was spent. The last one sung was, "One More Day's Work for Jesus." Mansfield walked out on the piazza repeating to himself, "I'll serve another day." Already he was learning the truth of Dr. Raymond's words—"Working for Christ constitutes the true joy of living."

Dr. Raymond too, went out into the moonlight. Finding Mrs. Lansing sitting alone, not surrounded at the moment, by her usual company, he seated himself beside her. "Mrs. Lansing, do you not think this a pleasant way of spending Sunday evening?"

"It may be for you, Dr. Raymond," rather haughtily, "but not for the young people. I believe in giving them a little innocent amusement."

"The young people, most of them at least, seemed to enjoy the singing, but Mrs. Lansing, it is God's evening, and not the time for amusements; we have all the other six for that. Can we not devote one in seven to Him, our Heavenly friend? We would not think *that* a very large proportion of our time to give to a very dear earthly friend."

Mrs. Lansing was secretly vexed; she had been in a state of vexation all the evening, but Dr. Raymond spoke so kindly and pleasantly, that she could not give an angry retort, so she turned the conversation into jest. "Now, Dr. Raymond, it is hardly fair for you to try to lead a woman into an argument, when you know very well that women are noted for their want of argumentative ability."

"I have no desire to argue, Mrs. Lansing, but I should be glad to have you see this matter in its true light; these young people are happier to-night, after spending the evening as they have done."

"Some of them may be," interrupted Mrs. Lansing hastily," but it is only because they have been taught to suppose that more sanctity attaches to *one* day, than to *another*. Now, I believe in making *all* our days good pure ones, living our religion—whatever it may be—all the week, and not hoarding it up for Sundays; I do not think that right living consists in church-going and psalm singing."

"Mrs. Lansing, you and I always find some points on which we agree," laughed Dr. Raymond. "I believe with you in living our relig-

ion all the week, showing the true spirit of Christ at all times, and in all places, but that does not alter the fact, that God has solemnly set apart one day in seven to be His day, and our stepping stone to heaven. I agree with you too, that many of the scruples these young hearts have, in regard to keeping the day sacred, are due to early training. How was it with you, Mrs. Lansing, were you not taught to reverence the day?"

"I do not know as there is any occasion for Dr. Raymond to be prying into the circumstances of my life," in an indignant tone.

"Excuse me, Mrs. Lansing, I did not ask from curiosity, but from real interest."

Again Mrs. Lansing was disarmed by the quiet kindness of voice and manner. She sat for a moment, leaning her face on her hand as if thinking, then spoke lightly: "I suppose that my father and mother must have felt somewhat as you do about the day, but *I* was always free to amuse myself as I chose;" then laughingly, "indeed, as a child, I think I must have followed my own sweet will; I was all they had. I am thankful that I have no disagreeable recollections of strictly kept Sundays, as Mr. Mans-

field has ; on the contrary, I have some very pleasant ones of swinging in the apple boughs, reading a nice story book while my parents were at church. They were too wise and kind, to put a poor little girl to the torture of sitting still through a long dull service, which she could not understand. I have always been very grateful to them, that they did not thus mar my childhood's pleasure, by robbing me of one seventh of my happy hours. I was never compelled to go to church, nor Sunday school, unless so inclined, and I generally found some more congenial occupation. After my early marriage, my husband and I were agreed on this subject ; he was occupied through the week, so I tried to make the day one of rest and recreation for him ; often we had company ; we rode, walked, or did whatever might be an amusement to a man, wearied with the business of the week. Our Sundays were happy days of enjoyment, and pleasant companionship ; I am thankful that I can remember them in this way. You have led me on, Dr. Raymond, into giving you unintentionally, a little chapter from my past life, and now I want to ask you *one* question ; will you give me an honest reply ? 'Do you not

think that our idea of making Sunday a day of rest and enjoyment, filled with innocent pleasure, more sensible than your austere one, of feeling compelled to spend the hours in strict and wearisome observances? ' "

" I will give you a very frank, honest answer ; it is a simple—*I do not*. I agree with you that the Sabbath should be a day of bodily relaxation, of happy freedom from the care and turmoil of worldly business. God knew man needed this rest, especially to the hard working poor man, is it a necessity. You remember, perhaps, what Holmes says—

" Yes, child of suffering, thou mayst well be sure,
He who ordained the Sabbath, loves the poor."

I believe too, with you, that it should be a cheerful day of joyous communing with home friends, a day to be kept with glad heartedness, but you forget entirely, that it is especially the *soul's* day, that it was appointed for the health of the soul, even more than for that of the body. You would not wish, Mrs. Lansing, to degrade the day of the Lord into a mere holiday, ignoring all the sublime ideas connected with it, all that it symbolizes and commemorates. If over

strung muscles and nerves need bracing and quieting, surely the spirit—fretted and harassed all the week—needs to be soothed and rested in its Father's love, to be cheered, comforted, as God alone can comfort, and to be pointed heavenward, so that by Monday morning, it may look out upon the world with new courage and hope. Then it is the God-given time for thought and preparation for eternity; our time to shake off the dust and soil of earth, that our souls may be fitted for audience with the King of kings. Time flies apace, the Sabbaths are all too few for the great end to be accomplished. And, Mrs. Lansing, let me assure you that a religiously-spent Sabbath, is far from being an unhappy, austere day, as you imagine; to a loving child of God, it is the brightest day of the seven."

"Is that so?" Mrs. Lansing asked rather quizzically. "I should not suppose it from the solemn faces often carried on that day; church attendants do not always look like happy children going to their Father's house. I do believe that many who call themselves Christians are glad when the restraints of Sunday are removed. I know there are exceptions. I have seen church-going people who really seemed to enjoy the day."

Mrs. Lansing rose to go. "I am really much obliged to you, Dr. Raymond, for your kindly attempt to convince me of my wrong; but, whether convinced or not, I shall have to confess to being of the same opinion still."

"I am sorry, Mrs. Lansing: you are the loser. I hope the time will come when you will find what a Saviour is Christ; what a refuge and resting-place is our God to the trustful soul; *then* I know you will look upon His day as beyond all price."

"Oh! thank you, Dr. Raymond; I believe you are sincere and truly kind, but I am not in need of any such refuge or resting place at present." There was a hard ring to her voice, as though she was making an effort to hide the feelings of her heart. "My creed is to take life cheerfully, getting all the pleasure out of it possible; to use all our faculties so as not to warp nor narrow them. I could not be bound by all the restraints of your religion; it would dwarf my spirit."

Dr. Raymond looked up at her sadly. "Mrs. Lansing, the time will come when you will feel your need of Christ; God grant that it may not come too late."

It was the last attempt Dr. Raymond made to talk with Mrs. Lansing on any religious subject ; he saw it was useless. She treated him politely, but her distant manner showed she did not wish any further conversation. The talented, self-confident woman did not realize, as she sat there in the moonlight that Sabbath evening, that in refusing the help of this fellow traveler, who would gladly have led her to Christ, she was spurning the Saviour Himself, for does not the Spirit speak to the souls of men by the voice of His messengers ?

After Mrs. Lansing departed Dr. Raymond sat thinking upon the difference between Henry Mansfield and Mrs. Lansing. They had been equally indifferent to the claims of the Heavenly Father, but the young artist had been ready to listen to words of loving counsel. At length he had chosen the good part, and was rejoicing in Christ, while Mrs. Lansing had rejected the Crucified One with proud contempt ; she did not need His love nor pity. " Would the day come when she would call in vain for mercy ? " he asked sadly.

And why is the same truth heeded by one and rejected by another ? Can there be more

than one answer—"They would not that I should reign over them."

Dr. Raymond's musings were interrupted by a hand laid impulsively upon his shoulder, and Mansfield's voice. "Dr. Raymond, how can I thank you enough for all your kind interest in me, all your faithfulness to me; I shall always love you like a father."

"And you will always seem to me like my own son. 'Sow beside all waters,'" thought Dr. Raymond, comforted; then he exclaimed earnestly, pointing to the hills that stood out in the moonlight in all their grandeur and beauty, "Oh! that the eyes of every one could be lifted up to the 'hills from whence cometh their help,' those glorious hills, symbols of God and His saving power."

That evening Dr. Raymond said to his wife, "I find that Mrs. Lansing is the spoiled child of Christian parents, who allowed her to spend her Sundays as she chose. I think of the two extremes in keeping the Sabbath—undue strictness and undue liberty—the latter is the most pernicious in its effects upon the children."

CHAPTER XX.

ONE bright morning Mrs. Raymond came to Agnes Spencer's room, her face smiling as usual. "Oh! Agnes dear," she said cheerily, "could we not get Miss Wright out into that charming woods near the house to spend the morning? The day is so lovely, and she is feeling so well, I am sure it would do her good; we can take our work and our books, and pass the hours delightfully out there, under the trees."

"I am glad you had such a brilliant thought, Mrs. Raymond; I am sure Eva could go, with Tom's help; we should all enjoy it exceedingly," and Agnes hastened to her friend's room, while Mrs. Raymond went to hunt up Tom. The gentlemen of their party were off on one of their expeditions, but, fortunately, Tom had not joined them this morning; his services were at their command; he bustled about, carrying out cushions, camp chairs, and shawls for the comfort of the party, then

carefully and gently assisted Miss Wright. With the help of his strong arms she reached the wood without much difficulty. It was a rare treat for her, she had been debarred so many out-door pleasures all summer.

“Oh! how bright you look; your eyes shine; they get bluer and bluer every day,” exclaimed Tom after she was seated. “You and Agnes are really getting fat and rosy.”

“Thank you for the compliment, sir Tom; but do not make fun of us,” laughed Miss Wright.

“Now, I’ve a mind to join this hen party,” continued Tom, “you do look so cosy.”

“You had better wait until you are invited by the hens,” was Belle’s quick retort.

“Oh! Tom, do stay,” said Mrs. Raymond; but Tom suddenly remembered that he had an engagement, so promising to be on hand to escort them back he departed.

Grace and several other children—little Irene among the number—followed the ladies out to the woods, and spent the hours wandering around, gathering ferns, mosses and flowers, occasionally bringing their treasures to the ladies. A large shaggy dog, belonging to Mr.

Bond—the little folks' constant companion—was ready, with bark and bound, to follow the children in their romps, returning often to the quiet company all out of breath, glad of a rest.

It was indeed a charming woods ; large, noble old trees spread out their branches for thick shade, while their rough trunks formed good backs for seats. Mrs. Raymond took a chair, but the others preferred the ground. A pretty picture the little group formed, seated on their bright-colored wraps, Miss Wright in her white fleecy shawl, the little girls in their light dresses, flitting back and forth, and the handsome dog stretched out beside them, watching them with his wise, solemn eyes, as though he understood all that was said.

“Very picturesque it all is,” thought Eva Wright, as she leaned back, the image of content ; the soft summer breeze lifted the hair from her forehead and stirred the leaves above her head, making sweet music. “How delightful it is to be out here, everything is so beautiful,” she exclaimed, while Agnes gave her a look of affection, thanking God that this dear life was to be spared to loving hearts.

“How soon all this loveliness will be ex

changed for snow and ice ; but even then the view will be fine, said Agnes, looking through the vista in the trees at the charming perspective of dim blue hills.

“It hardly seems possible that a few weeks will produce such a transformation, but we know they will. *I* was just thinking how soon we must leave all this beauty ; I must say it gives me a little heart-ache to think of going back to the city.”

“Oh ! dear Mrs. Raymond, do not talk of leaving,” exclaimed Miss Wright.

“But I am sorry to say our time is almost spent ; we are staying now longer than we expected.”

“And our vacation, too, is nearly over,” said Belle. “Tom and I will have to go with you, Aunt Maggie ; but we will have good company, that is one consolation.”

“Now, if I had a grown up daughter, like any of these,” and a shadow flitted across the happy face, “I might send her home with my husband, and I could remain a little longer ; I so dread returning to the city heat.”

“And if you had a grown up daughter, Aunt Maggie, she might make you all manner of

trouble," laughed Belle, tenderly kissing the soft cheek.

"Yes; she might get married and run away, leaving me as much alone as I am now; it is all right, I know. Agnes, I see you have brought your Bible."

"Yes; I thought this morning might be a pleasant time to continue our conversation of the other day about the Sabbath; we stopped at a point of great interest to me—preparation for the day. The Jews were commanded to gather a double quantity of manna on the sixth day; then, on the Sabbath, every man was to 'abide in his place.' I remember so well, when I first had the responsibility of a family, how you called one Saturday afternoon and found me so tired I could not make myself agreeable. I told you my Sundays were spoiled by my Saturday's work and care. You gave me some hints about planning, so that some of the extras would come on Friday; telling me, also, to provide for the Sunday meals on Saturday, as far as possible. I acted on those two hints, and ever since have aimed to have my Saturday afternoons to myself."

"I do not remember the call, Agnes," said

Mrs. Raymond ; “but I know, by experience, that this is the only way for a housekeeper and mother to enjoy a restful Sabbath ; many poor mothers and sisters, who carry the family burdens, often go to church too exhausted to enjoy the service. I have given many young wives and sisters the same practical hints.”

“I think this must have been my dear mother’s way,” said Agnes. “Everything was done to make the family comfortable, yet she never seemed hurried nor anxious ; but I did not understand, until I had the care myself, how much forethought and planning it required.”

“The Jews, I think, called Friday the ‘eve of the Sabbath,’ said Miss Wright. The trumpet sounded that evening from the steps of the temple for all labor to cease. Sunday commenced on Friday at sunset, and lasted till the stars appeared on Saturday evening. Then, I believe, they were forbidden to commence any work on Friday that they could not finish on that day.”

“I wonder if that is not the reason it is considered unlucky to commence anything now on Friday ?” queried Belle.

“That may be,” laughed Mrs. Raymond ;

“but it is a very foolish idea wherever it originated. ‘Work well begun is half done,’ so be certain, Belle, to make a commencement, be it on Friday or any other convenient day. But I do place great stress upon preparation for the Sabbath. If we fail in it, we may not have to fast as the Jews did, who gathered no manna. But Agnes, you, and Miss Wright too, perhaps, know how much we may lose of the peace, comfort and rest of the Sabbath. On God’s day we want to be as free from the worry of household matters as it is possible to be.”

“And from all other worries,” chimed in Agnes, “an ideal Sabbath is hard to attain. Yet we cannot expect to enjoy our day if the morning light finds our hearts full of the concentrated anxiety, care and worldliness of the whole week. Oh! if we could only drop them all on Saturday, how blessed it would be.”

“I read, not long ago,” said Miss Wright, “of the Jewish custom of welcoming and taking leave of the Sabbath with the cup of blessing, with lights and with spices, ushering in the day with the sound of silver trumpets. It seems a very beautiful idea, does it not, Mrs. Raymond?”

“It certainly does ; it was their day of rejoicing ; but, alas ! it soon grew to be a mere formal observance. Jesus found little true heart service among the people when He came.”

“Aunt Maggie, do you think it is right to read novels on Sunday ?” asked Belle. “I do not mean Sunday School books, but genuine novels, full of romance, but not a word of religion in them.”

“No, Belle, I do not ; I should call that a waste of God’s holy time.”

“Some of the girls in school do it ; they call me ‘prim and prudish’ because I will not.”

“Perhaps they come from homes where the Sabbath is not hallowed, so that it seems to them a harmless way of spending the time ; but they are losing all the blessing the day was intended to bring to their hearts. But, dear Belle, do not let their example, Mrs. Lansing’s teachings, nor anything else, lessen your estimate of the holiness of God’s day.”

They sat silent a few moments, then Miss Wright spoke rather sadly ; “Since I have been sick—especially since I have been here in the mountains—my Sundays have been such sleepy ones, I waste so many of the precious hours in

sleep ; body and mind are so stupid that I often cannot read, nor even think ; it is such a grief to me."

"And that is just what you need to do now ; soon health and strength will return, then the spirit will awake, and the Sabbaths be used and enjoyed as they once were. I know all about it ; how the soul sympathizes with the body. I remember once, when I was sick for months, how I mourned over my wasted Sabbaths, until my husband made me see it in a different light."

Miss Wright's face grew brighter, but she continued, " Sometimes, when you have all been at church, and I would sit and watch the cloud-shadows on the mountains, and the leaves of the trees by my window swaying listlessly in the breeze, I just felt as idle and listless as they. It often brought the tears to my eyes to think that my Sabbaths were just like all my other days."

"Those serve who sit and wait, dear Eva ; this is your waiting time ; do not imagine you have lost your love for God's day ; lifeless Sundays have been a burden to many sick ones who mistook physical languor for deadness of soul."

Agnes sat with her Bible open. "Mrs. Raymond, I have looked for all that Jesus says about His day, and find it is very little. He calls Himself the Lord of the Sabbath, yet does not enjoin its observance, nor give instructions about the way it should be kept."

"He gives all that is necessary, Agnes. The little He says, His acts of love and mercy, show us the spirit in which it should be observed. You know the Jews of His time kept the letter of the law scrupulously, but it was not heart service."

"Why did Jesus make clay to anoint the blind man's eyes, and command the impotent man to carry his bed?" asked Belle. "He could have healed them without their doing these things."

"For this very purpose that we are talking about, Belle—to show them that their customs were of human origin, and were foolish and wrong; to show them and us that works of love and compassion cannot be wrong on any day. The dear Saviour wanted to teach that the Sabbath, to be truly kept, must be kept with the heart, and not in mere outward form. The Blessed One could not pass by suffering without

being moved to exert His almighty power to restore and bless. His infinite pity and love were manifested to the sick and diseased on the Sabbath, and on all days, in acts of healing mercy," said Mrs. Raymond with deep feeling.

"How wonderful it all was!" exclaimed Miss Wright, with tears in her eyes.

"Wonderful, indeed, it was, and still is, that same infinite pity and love are ours to-day, dear Eva. Yet for these very deeds of compassion and healing—shown often to the humblest—did the Jews persecute Jesus and seek to kill Him, because they were done on the Sabbath day. Christ's example reveals to us just what kind of work He would have His children do on His day."

"It always seems to me," said Agnes, "that it is the day of days for sweet and gentle ministries, for deeds of love and kindness."

"It certainly is, Agnes. On the Sabbath our hearts should go out with peculiar affection and tenderness toward relatives and friends, and toward suffering humanity. But then we must not forget that Christ's healing was of the soul as well as of the body; the healing and teaching of the *souls* of men were far the highest part of

His work. If we—like our Master—can carry our little measure of comfort, joy and heavenly inspiration to any broken, darkened spirit, surely *that* is a Sabbath labor of love. Most of us can find time during the week to provide for the bodily needs of the poor around us, but on Sunday our principal aim should be to carry them divine food, to tell them of Jesus and His love. So you see, Agnes, while Christ *said* so little about keeping the day, His *acts* teach us many lessons.”

“Aunt Maggie, was not Sunday once dedicated to the worship of the sun?”

“Yes, Belle; and it is beautiful to think that *now* it celebrates the coming of the glorious Sun of Righteousness.”

“O, Aunt Maggie, the great charm of the Sabbath, is the resurrection of Christ, is it not?” asked Belle excitedly.

“It is indeed; even if God had never commanded us to give Him one seventh of our time, we could not help remembering and loving the day when Jesus rose from the dead.”

And Agnes looking away to the distant hills, repeated softly—

“‘Already angels throng the air—
And He is risen declare.’”

“Yes, my dear girls,” continued Mrs. Raymond, after a short silence, “the recollection that Christ Jesus, our Lord, ‘is risen to-day,’ must give preciousness to each returning Sabbath, making it our day of thanksgiving—our triumphant holy day; with such a feeling in our hearts, we shall have little trouble in deciding what is right or wrong for us to do on Sunday, for while we know that every moment of our lives belongs to God, we shall feel that His resurrection day is peculiarly his own, to be loved and consecrated. Soon we shall all be scattered, our pleasant little party here broken up; the best I can wish for you is, that all your Sabbaths may be blessed ones, until you reach the land of eternal joy and praise.”

Tom, who for some moments had been an unnoticed, but attentive listener, suddenly appeared. “Come, don’t you call it about time to end this long session?”

Mrs. Raymond looked at her watch—“It certainly is Tom; can it be possible that it is almost the dinner hour; our dishevelled locks will need some arranging.”

“Yours surely will, Aunt Maggie,” laughed Belle; “the saucy breezes have not been very

polite," smoothing the gray curls, "but no fingers can make them look so carelessly pretty as the wind has."

The children had made the ladies several visits during the morning, and soon they came trooping back with shaggy dog, and cunning dimpled cheeked Irene, bringing with them ferns and mosses.

"Poor little Irene is sick, I guess," said Grace; "she laid down on the leaves and wouldn't play, 'cause she wasso tired?'"

"Are you tired little toddles?" asked Belle. "You are too small to travel so far, I'll carry you home;" and Belle took the child in her strong arms, saying to Agnes, "I do believe this poor little mite is sick."

Tom took charge of Miss Wright, while Mrs. Raymond and Agnes gathered up the wraps; the children following on, tired and hungry.

"What a cavalcade!" shouted Tom, "and here comes Cousin Henry to meet us; come to the rescue old fellow, but you can't have my lady."

Cousin Henry insisted upon relieving Belle of her burden. On the piazza they passed Mrs. Lansing seated in a shady corner, the center of

a cozy little group, all busied with fancy work and books.

"Why, Mr. Mansfield, carrying a colored baby? this must be a new accomplishment," was Mrs. Lansing's remark, with a touch of sarcasm in her tone.

"The child is sick," was the short reply from Mansfield, as he strode away with his little model.

"She is fast asleep, bring her right to Aggie's room," said Belle; "you will not mind having her lie on your bed, will you Aggie? she is just as sweet and clean as any child."

"Why no, of course not; let her lie there and sleep, perhaps she is only weary; Dinah is too busy now, to care for her little girl." But a pitiful moan from the child gave evidence of pain, as well as weariness.

"I think it was mean in Mrs. Lansing, to speak as she did to Cousin Henry," said Belle indignantly, after Mansfield had left the room. "After he passed, I heard her laughing and saying, 'Mr. Mansfield has strange freaks in these days; one cannot imagine what may be the next thing that his new religion may prompt him to do! Aggie, I don't like Mrs. Lansing half so

well as I did at first ; how queer people are, they disappoint you so dreadfully."

"My dear Belle," said Agnes, putting her arm around her young sister, "no one is perfect, you must not expect perfection."

"Why, I don't, Aggie, but I like to find people true. Mrs. Lansing can be so sweet and lovely, but she can say awfully hateful, sarcastic things ; she is always making fun of religion and Christians."

"Be careful Belle, that you are not influenced."

"Indeed she can't do that, but I am vexed to find she is not what she seems ; she is so handsome and elegant, and entertaining ; but with all her graces she cannot compare with my sweet, true sister," giving Agnes a hug.

So Agnes Spencer's fears of Mrs. Lansing's evil influence over Belle were scattered, yet she regretted that this young girl must learn so soon, that outward appearances cannot always be trusted, nor honeyed words and smiles always believed.

"We must not be too severe in our judgment of Mrs. Lansing ; she seems to be very much alone in the world, and she has no hope in God, no hope of heaven ; she is greatly to be pitied."

"I did not think of that ; her heart must be sad sometimes ; I am sorry for her, but Aggie, I *did* think at first she was the most delightful woman I ever saw."

CHAPTER XXI.

LITTLE Irene proved to be very sick; that evening when Agnes went to Dinah's room to inquire about the household pet, she found the child moaning and tossing on its mother's lap. Dinah was rocking her gently, and trying to quiet her in all tender, motherly ways. For several days she was very sick. Agnes, Belle, and kind Mrs. Raymond, helped Dinah in the care of the little one. One little lullaby that Belle sang always quieted Irene—"Sleep, Baby Sleep." Again and again she called for it, and Belle sang it, sadly wondering if little Irene was the lamb that "dear Jesus" would soon carry in His arms.

A few days of pain and restlessness, a few days of loving, tending, anxiety and tears, then the frail life they were watching flickered and went out, the little one lay cold and still in death, while Dinah stood over her darling with streaming eyes. "My dear pet lammie has done gone to lib wid de angels, Miss Agnes—gone to

be Jesus' little lammie. Jesus tuck her, but poor Dinah's leff all alone."

Agnes Spencer hardly knew how to speak to the poor broken heart; but Mrs. Raymond, who had little ones of her own "safe in the arms of Jesus," went to the colored mother with such soothing words of comfort and hope, that Dinah's face shone with the joy of the blessed thought. "Jesus lub my darling little girl so much dat He mus' hab her in His heabenly garden. No sin, no sorrow, no trubble for my little Irene any more. Jesus pay Dinah great honor to take *her* chile to lib wid Him."

The death of the little girl cast a gloom over the whole house, for the pretty, cunning Irene had been a great pet and favorite with every one. Grace was inconsolable, while Belle, Tom, and even Mansfield, felt almost as bad; but Mrs. Lansing, for some reason, did not join in the universal regret for the child and sympathy for poor Dinah. "I cannot imagine why there should be so much fuss made about the death of a servant's little black baby," she was heard to remark more than once.

Did she think the mother heart could not grieve and mourn because her skin was dark?

Poor Dinah, the colored cook, carried a heavier weight of sorrow than many mothers do when their daintily dressed, fair-complexioned little daughters are taken away, for was she not Dinah's all, and did she not love her little Irene with a more devoted, unselfish love, than many wealthy mothers lavish upon their darlings?"

Dinah had no friends nor acquaintances near; her former home was far away in the sunny South, so Dr. Raymond and others arranged for a little service in the parlor and a burial in the pleasant woods not far from the house. The boarders sent for a pretty casket, in which they placed the little Irene, looking very sweet, her plump cheeks and dimpled hands unwasted by long illness. The children gathered wild flowers and laid them in and around the coffin—beautiful flowers that the child had loved. "Oh, if she could only see them!" exclaimed Grace; "how her eyes used to dance when she found any handsome ones, how quick she would pick them and hold them tight in her fat little hands."

But the soft, lustrous eyes—the charm of the little girl—were hidden under the closed lids, never again to look upon earthly flowers. Dr. Raymond spoke a few simple, tender words that

the children could understand, and offered a touching prayer that went straight to poor Dinah's heart. At Belle's suggestion, the little folks sang "Jesus loves me"—Irene's favorite hymn. When Mrs. Raymond gathered the children together, Sunday afternoons, she always asked to sing these sweet verses that have been sung by so many childish voices all over the world.

"And now she sings them up in heaven," said Dr. Raymond, "and knows better than we can imagine how much Jesus loves little children." Then they laid the casket, containing the little form so precious to *one* heart, out under the trees, and Dinah, with the strong faith of her race, went about her work, gentle and quiet, but comforted and cheered by the hope of re-union.

"Sometimes, Miss Grace, I think I hears de angels singin', and I knows my little Irene's voice, and she puts out her little hands to me; she's just a-waitin' for me to come to de heab-enly city, de blessed chile!"

"Do you really think she is?" asked Grace wonderingly, "she can't see you."

"Why, Miss Grace, she's right here wid me

all de time ; I knows she is ; some day I'll just take her in dese arms ; won't dat be joyful ? ”

Poor little Irene's death—with the interest and sympathy it excited in the house—and the simple funeral, seemed to arouse all Mrs. Lansing's bitterness and opposition ; she made many sarcastic speeches about the “little black baby,” as she always called the child, which shocked many hearts.

“ I think Mrs. Lansing is just dreadful,” said Belle to Agnes. “ I cannot imagine why she feels so, she is generally kind ; why should she hate this poor innocent child ? Do you suppose it is because her skin was black ? ”

“ Oh, Belle ! it is not Irene that Mrs. Lansing hates,” replied Agnes, with a pitiful look on her face ; “ I fear it is the enmity of her heart toward Christ and his people. You know Dinah is a very earnest Christian, she is always singing and talking about ‘ her Jesus,’ in her Methodist fashion. Then little Irene has been a special pet with the Christians in the house. Poor Mrs. Lansing ! If she only had ignorant Dinah's sweet hope and trust in the Saviour how much happier her life would be.”

One evening, just before Dr. Raymond left

the mountains, some of his friends led him on to speak of all he had seen in foreign lands, asking him many questions about the state of morals and religion in France and other countries. As usual, Mansfield was sitting near Dr. Raymond; they were so constantly together that Mrs. Lansing had named them "The Inseparables." In Dr. Raymond's statement of the results of his own observations while abroad, several times he appealed to Mansfield, especially in regard to some things in France, for the artist had spent much time in the beautiful city of Paris. Mansfield was astonished and saddened to find how utterly ignorant he was about matters which had evidently awakened Dr. Raymond's deep interest.

At length he exclaimed, "You must remember, Dr. Raymond, that I visited foreign shores with my eyes closed to everything that did not relate to my profession; I saw the artistic, but as to the state of the people—physical or spiritual—I did not trouble myself to inquire; it was a narrow view, but I accomplished my end."

"Oh! excuse me, Mansfield; I know you were completely pre-occupied, but if you ever

go again you will return better posted on some things, I do not doubt."

Dr. Raymond gave a very interesting account of the MacAll mission, and the noble work it has done, and is doing, in sunny France, "that glorious land where placards—'No God, no religion,' and they might have added no Sabbath—were often seen."

Mansfield was all interest; he did not even know that there was such a mission. "The next time I visit France I will spend my Sundays helping on this good work," he thought. Mr. Fenton asked Mansfield about the American Chapel at Paris. The young artist had to admit that he had never heard of it, and knew nothing of its success.

"But where did you attend church?" asked the young minister in surprise.

Mansfield answered with some embarrassment, "I might as well confess that I never attended any church in all the time I was in charming Paris, excepting to drop into some cathedral to hear some fine music, or catch some fine effect when the building was lighted. Sunday was my working day as well as Monday but I am glad to say I have seen my mistake."

Mr. Perrin turned the attention from the embarrassed young man by asking—"Dr. Raymond, do you not think there is much of old time Pharisaical formalism in the church of the present day in regard to keeping the Sabbath?"

"Well, I sincerely hope not, Mr. Perrin."

"But I have seen professing Christians who were very conscientious in attending church and prayer meetings, men who could not be persuaded to take a walk or ride on Sunday, or to touch a secular book or paper, yet whose hearts were full of strife, bitterness, uncharitableness, and all iniquity, and who carried these evil things right into their church pews. Is not such a service a mere form? Is it any more acceptable *now* than in olden times?"

"Certainly not; no outward observance of God's command can atone for neglect of the weightier matters of the law—the great law of love. I fear the Christians you mention were not the genuine article; but we must be careful, Mr. Perrin, how we judge the hearts of our fellow-travelers."

"Charity in all our judgments," said kind Mrs. Raymond, "nothing can compensate for the want of *that*. I do suppose, if we could

read the hearts of our fellow men, condemnation would be far rarer than it is."

"You are right, Mrs. Raymond, I know; perhaps I am a little severe, but sometimes evil things crop out so conspicuously that we are forced to our conclusions."

"I often wonder," said Dr. Raymond, "what the world would be without the Sabbath. Think of our missionaries and our mission stations in the isles of the sea, deprived of the moral power of this break in the weekly labor, this day of heavenly aims and instructions. We cannot imagine the sin and misery of the world if this day were blotted out of the calendar."

"May we not expect a special presence of the Spirit on the Sabbath in our labor of winning souls to Christ?" asked Mr. Perrin.

"I think we may; the first outpouring of the Spirit was on that day, thus constituting the 'triple light,' of which Wordsworth speaks in his beautiful hymn."

"But the most blessed remembrance which the dawn of dawns brings to our minds each week," exclaimed Mrs. Raymond, "is the truth that Christ Jesus has rolled away the stone through redemption's might for us; that there

is no barrier between our souls and God. We need not save all our rejoicing for Easter," with a happy smile, "for every returning Sabbath morning is an Easter of joy and gladness."

"Oh! I long to tell the story," exclaimed Mansfield with a beaming face as he rose to go.

September had cast her soft hazy veil over the mountains, and filled the air with lulling, drowsy music. Already an occasional branch of brightly tinted foliage, a flaming clump of alders, or sumachs in the lowlands, told the sad tale—summer has ended, decay has commenced, Nature's yearly solemn parable to the soul of man. But if it be a solemn lesson it need not be a sad one, for the resurrection of spring is sure to follow, and death is but the beginning of life. The spring and summer of life fly swiftly, then comes the autumn of decay, forerunner of the winter of death, but beyond is the fadeless, deathless land, where naught can change nor wither.

The abiders among mountains and valleys were forsaking their summer dwelling-places for their city homes. Our pleasant little party must be broken up. Dr. and Mrs. Raymond must return to their work, and Belle and Tom

to their school, while the two artist cousins had decided that they, too, must leave, as they wished to make several other little trips before settling down for the winter. Agnes Spencer, with Miss Wright and little Grace, would be the only ones to remain. Even they concluded that their stay would be short, as they feared that the large house would be very lonely without its usual company. "It may be too quiet even for us; we do not care to be left utterly alone," were Miss Wright's words.

"This first Sabbath in September, and our last one among these glorious hills!" exclaimed Dr. Raymond to Henry Mansfield, at their usual Sunday morning meeting on the piazza. "I do leave them most regretfully, exchanging these quiet, peaceful scenes for the noise and bustle of city life. Yet I do long to get back to my work among my waiting people. I hope to go down to them from these heights with new strength and zeal for my duties."

"I do not doubt you will take hold of work with new earnestness, Dr. Raymond. But if *you* regret leaving this delightful retreat, these beautiful hills, think how hard it will be for *me* to leave them, for here is my true birth-place. I

have a friend who courted his wife at a mountain resort, and every year these two happy young people go back to the spot that will ever be so dear for its memories. I do not know but Cousin Robert will be doing the same thing one of these days."

Dr. Raymond nodded and smiled. "I should not be surprised."

"But, Dr. Raymond, no lover's tender recollections and associations can equal those which, to me, will ever be connected with these hills."

"You are right, Mansfield; this will ever be to you the most blessed spot on earth; no union of hearts—however true and perfect—can compare with the union of a soul with its God. When *this* is consummated there is joy among the angels of heaven."

"Sometimes, Dr. Raymond, the fear will creep into my heart that I may fail and wander away, for I see, daily, more and more of my own weakness. I cannot imagine anything more dreadful than to go back to those old days of unrest and unbelief—those Sabbath breaking, godless days."

"Those fears are born of the devil; put them away as soon as possible. You need have no

such fears; God is able to keep you faithful to the end. God never forsakes, *we* do the forsaking; but He is able to keep us even from this treachery. Go forward trustfully and courageously to meet every foe; be not afraid, for has he not said, 'Lo! I am with you alway;' 'Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.' "

CHAPTER XXII.

BEFORE the breakfast bell sounded all our little party had gathered on the piazza for a view of the beautiful mountains and the lovely valley, Miss Wright, for the first time, being among the number, receiving most hearty congratulations upon her rosy cheeks and bright eyes, which the invigorating mountain air had at last restored.

“There is an elixir up here that will heal if we can only have the patience to wait for it,” laughed Dr. Raymond.

It was a happy little company. “This must be our very best Sabbath,” said Mrs. Raymond. “I do not mean to spoil my day—as I fear my gudeman here is a little inclined to do—with regrets that so soon we must leave all this beauty. We have been upon the heights and looked off on the land of Beulah, and now we will go down gladly, if a little regretfully, to our work in the valley, but to day must be all joy.”

And a joyful day it proved to be to all those

hearts, even Tom catching the infection, for he wrote to Agnes in his first letter from school—"What a good day that was, that last Sunday in the mountains; we don't have any such Sundays in this place."

Again, that morning, Dr. Raymond was to preach in the valley church. This earnest Christian made one more effort to win Mrs. Lansing to a better state of feeling, inviting her most cordially and politely to attend the service, but she as politely declined. A very decided refusal it was, although expressed very affably, with many smiles and thanks. It was a grief to Dr. and Mrs. Raymond to leave the mountains without any hope that this gifted woman was seeking after God.

When Dr. Raymond told Mansfield of Mrs. Lansing's refusal, the young man smiled. "I could have told you it would be useless effort; she is a very determined woman—one not to be easily influenced; her forte is to influence others; for that she has a natural talent."

The little church was filled that beautiful September morning, nearly all the boarders going to hear Dr. Raymond, while the little hamlet and its vicinity sent out a goodly number. Miss

Wright was able to attend for the first time. It was a happy day for her. She rode down the hill—accompanied by Robert and Agnes Spencer—as the bell was sounding its invitation.

Dr. Raymond's heart was full that day. As Henry Mansfield said, "He had a message from the Lord of heaven and earth, and he delivered it most faithfully." In closing his sermon he made a powerful and eloquent appeal for the sanctity of God's day. As Mansfield listened to the burning words he wondered how he ever could have flung away the precious pearls—his Sabbath days—unmindful of their priceless value. With a penitent heart, he resolved, afresh, to guard them jealously in the future, that they be not lost nor lightly esteemed, but be kept and used with watchful care, as we prize and wear a valuable jewel, the gift of a loved, departed one.

As the day was very warm few remained to the Sunday School, and there was a class for Mansfield. Shy, awkward boys they seemed; but he soon discovered that they had quick, bright minds. Sitting down beside them, he soon became greatly interested as he strove to show them—with story and illustration—the

infinite love of God in Christ. He was astonished to find that he soon won their undivided attention. In the little chapel that day a treasure house seemed to open before the eyes of Henry Mansfield. He saw something of the true worth of the immortal soul of the humblest and most degraded, and caught a glimpse of all that he might be enabled to do for sinful, wandering men, which sent a thrill of delight through his heart. In after years, with all the enthusiasm and earnestness with which he painted beautiful pictures, he took hold of labor for Christ, developing rare gifts, and finding in the glorious work a blessedness which he had never found in his beloved art.

As the sun was nearing the western peaks that afternoon, there was a delightful little communion service in Ernest Saunders' room. Ernest had long been intending and desiring to unite with the little valley church, but many things had prevented. Now he was very anxious that the feast be spread before Dr. Raymond left the mountains, so, at his earnest request, his pastor had arranged for the meeting that afternoon.

A few old friends—with the little company

from the hotel—were the only ones present. These *new* friends who had met in his room so often during the summer Sunday afternoons, all strangers at the commencement of the season, excepting Dr. Raymond, had wound themselves very closely around Ernest's heart; he was very happy to have them with him at this glad service. But there was another in that little room that day who was far more welcome than were even these true, kind friends; another whose radiant form was all unseen by mortal eyes, but whose presence was felt by every heart. Jesus—the “Elder Brother”—took His seat beside the board, speaking sweet words of comfort and peace; saying, in tender accents, “Take, eat, this is My body broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me.”

“In remembrance of Me!” How blessed the words sounded in the ears of Henry Mansfield, as he sat there an interested spectator at this beautiful, solemn service. He could hardly keep back the tears as he remembered all that Christ had suffered for him. How wonderful and touching it all seemed to him, carrying him back to his boyhood's days, when he sat beside his sainted mother at the feast, and wondered

what it could all mean. Ah! he understood its meaning now, and knew why his mother's face shone through her tears as she took the sacred symbols.

For a few moments there was silence in the room, a brooding silence which could be felt, and seemed to Mansfield more impressive than any words. Sweet peace was in the very air—God's peace—and it settled down upon his spirit like a benediction. The silence was broken by Dr. Raymond singing the sweet words of the hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood." Henry Mansfield joined in the singing with an overflowing heart, thanking God that he might hope that his soul had been cleansed at this fountain, that upon him—all sinful and rebellious as he was—the unspeakable gift had been bestowed.

Not much like an afflicted one did Ernest Saunders look that afternoon, as he took the bread and wine in memory of Him who died to save his soul. Mansfield watched his face—glowing with solemn joy—and wondered how he could ever have called this happy Christian "poor Saunders."

"We shall all meet again some day," said

Dr. Raymond at the close; "if not here on earth, then in the beautiful celestial city. It does not matter whether it be here or there, but we shall surely meet, for are we not all one in Christ Jesus?"

One heart in the room felt a pang at these words. It was Tom Spencer's. He wondered whether he should be left out at the glad meeting time. Dear little Grace—with her sweet, child-like faith—never doubted for a moment that she would be among the happy throng, and with the Saviour that she loved.

A parting hymn, a few words of prayer, with its touching benediction, then the little company separated quietly, feeling that heaven had indeed come down "their souls to greet," on this last Sabbath which they were to spend together on the heights. "From this sacred little room we always carry away a blessing," said Dr. Raymond to his wife, as they slowly climbed the hill in the fading light.

Agnes and Mansfield walked home together, taking the same path they took that first Sabbath afternoon, and stopping at Agnes' rock to rest and look off upon the beautiful valley and distant hills.

"Cousin Agnes, do you remember the lines you repeated that first Sunday on this rock—
'To be alone with God, this is to rest'?"

"Oh! yes, I remember very well."

"I could not understand it then, but I do now. I understood it this afternoon in that little room."

"'Great shall be the peace of Thy children,'" said Agnes, the tears filling her eyes, thankful tears that this dear cousin had found the true resting place.

"I can hardly believe I am the same person," continued Mansfield. "How vexed I was that first Sabbath that you all spent the day so religiously, and now there is nothing I prize as I do these services of prayer and praise."

"Like me, you have found your lost pearl," said Agnes with a bright smile.

"Yes, I have; and it is a precious gem, ever to be treasured."

They talked on until the twilight warned them homeward, Mansfield going over all the path God had led him, admitting to Agnes that he had never been at ease since the night of the fire, and thanking her for all her kind interest, and sweet, winning teachings.

The next day the inmates of this pleasant resort began to depart. Dr. Raymond and wife, Belle and Tom, went the first of the week, Mansfield and Robert Spencer a few days later.

There were two kind acts which Mansfield did before his departure that carried joy to two hearts; one was to copy his picture of little Irene and present it to Dinah. "De blessed Lord must hab put it into your heart, Massa Henry, to gib me back my lammie," sobbing and crying. "Dis goes wid poor Dinah till she find her baby on de udder shore."

The other heart made happy by a gift was that of Ernest Saunders. The day before leaving Mansfield went down to the cottage to say good-bye to his friend, carrying with him two lovely little landscapes; a quiet scene from the meadow, with birds and brook; and another with rocks, woods and distant mountains, saying very soberly, "They were not painted on Sunday."

Ernest's eyes just danced with delight, for he had a great love of the beautiful. "Why, Mr. Mansfield, this is just like bringing these charming spots right into my room."

Mansfield had been an almost daily visitor at the cottage since he became a Christian. He

hated to leave this newly-found friend, and he knew that Saunders would miss his calls. "You have taught me many blessed lessons, Saunders. You were such an enigma to me at the first. I could not imagine how a man, cut off from all that makes life desirable, could be so buoyant and happy, often full of fun, so patient and submissive. I thought you were the most unnatural man I ever met, but it is all plain to me now. Christ is your life and joy. He is compensation for all your trials here on earth, and then heaven is beyond. I know now what it is that makes your face shine. Whenever I am tempted to murmur or complain, I shall remember you, my good friend."

"And I shall not forget you; these lovely pictures will be a continual reminder; how I shall enjoy them when winter comes, and everything is dreary outside. 'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,' they say, and these will be a continual light and joy in my room."

The young artist grasped the thin white hand in his strong brown one, with a hearty "Good-bye, Saunders, my good friend."

"Good-bye, Mr. Mansfield; may God bless you."

“Now drop the Mr. and call me Mansfield; you and I are friends—true and tried—as long as we both live.”

“And on beyond,” said Saunders smiling. “How glad I am we may hope to meet in heaven.”

“I do not think so much of that home, perhaps, as you do. I want to *live* and work for Christ; I have only just commenced to know the true joy of living; there is so much I long to do for Him—my Master and my King.”

“How rejoiced I am, Mansfield, that you are going to carry the message to darkened souls.”

And thus the two men parted, the *one* to go out into the world to do brave, noble work for God and humanity; the *other* to do equally noble, perhaps braver work in his quiet room; for, as Mansfield said to Saunders, “To suffer and be strong is more heroic than to be strong and work.”

Ernest Saunders' words of hope and cheer went far and wide through his letters, while his beautiful example was a power for good, of which he little dreamed. When the secrets of earth are revealed, then shall it be understood what his brave life hath wrought.

Oh ! these patient, suffering lives ; how many hearts thank God for all their sweet teachings ; what would the world do without the pattern of their quiet trust and submission, this tumultuous world, with all its hurry and fret ?

Such lives are a poem, an inspiration, a testimony to all that God can be to a human spirit ; the busy world needs the example of their patient, joyful living.

Be comforted then, O afflicted one, and cheerfully bide God's time for release from pain and weakness.

When Agnes Spencer went to her room, after watching the stage out of sight which carried away her brother Robert and Cousin Henry, she was feeling rather lonely and sad, but on her table she found the following little poem in Cousin Henry's hand-writing, which dissipated all sad thought :

My Pearl, my beautiful Pearl,
My precious Sabbath day !
I hold in my hand a priceless gem,
So fair it might deck a diadem ;
Shall I cast my Pearl away ?
My Pearl, my beautiful Pearl ;
Lost treasure found at last
The brightest jewel in all the seven,
Aglow with clearest light from heaven ;
How blind I was in the past !

My Pearl, my goodly Pearl !
No gem sheds a purer ray ;
The Saviour has opened the casket fair,
Revealing the beauty hidden there ;
Blest resurrection day !

As Agnes read the lines her eyes brightened. "Dear Cousin Henry, how I rejoice with you !" she exclaimed aloud ; yet she hardly realized how much she had helped him in finding this hidden treasure.

Agnes was the only one of our party who received a parting gift from Ernest Saunders. When she went to the cottage to make her last call he presented her with a lovely little card, which he had decorated himself. A cherished token of affection it was, one that Agnes kept as the sweetest memento of her sojourn among the beautiful hills. During these long summer days, when Ernest had heard so much said about art and pictures, he had caught the infection, and grown so enthusiastic that Mansfield, before his departure, gave him some instruction in painting, thus opening to the invalid a new source of entertainment and delight. Many dark wintry days were made very bright to Ernest by the use of brushes, pencils, and other materials sent him by his artist friend in the city.

Agnes had intended, before leaving the mountains, to provide Ernest with a large screen to protect him from the heat of the stove, from which he often suffered. But one day, when she called, she found the needed article already there. Another kind friend had supplied his want, and made him very grateful and happy. So Agnes sent for a nice "Teacher's Bible," which she knew Ernest greatly desired, leaving it at the cottage to be a surprise and comfort to him in the loneliness that must follow the departure of so many friends.

"My dear, blessed Bible," he wrote her in his first letter, "is daily read with many grateful thoughts of the giver; it is a treasure to me. I often lie and hold it in my hand, then look up at Mr. Mansfield's beautiful pictures—hanging opposite my bed—and thank God for all the dear friends and pleasant memories of the summer that is past and gone."

In a couple of weeks Robert Spencer returned for his sisters and Miss Wright. After their departure silence and loneliness took possession of the deserted rooms, piazzas and corridors of the large hotel, which had been so gay and musical for several months. The woods, mountains and sylvan lake, which had echoed and re

echoed with song and laughter, were left in their lonely beauty and grandeur, with no human eye to admire, no human voice to break the stillness.

One could almost imagine the hills asking, "Why did not these lovers of Nature remain to behold us in our glorious autumn dress of dark purple, yellow and rich crimson? 'a pomp and pageant' which nothing in their city homes can equal." But this wealth of glory which should flame out on hill and mountain side, all unseen and unadmired, would speedily fade and die. Already the leaves covered the little grave under the trees, and soon the snow would hide it from sight; but Dinah went away comforted—carrying with her the precious picture—for she knew that the cold wintry blasts could never reach her darling, now safe in the beautiful land.

To many of the guests the summer of rest and recreation was ended; the winter of hard work and endeavor must commence; but they had acquired new strength, vitality and courage for the battle.

Robert Spencer left the hills a very happy young man, for during the bright, beautiful days of his stay among them he had sought and gained the heart of one long admired and loved.

Some went down from these mountain tops nearer to God, more earnest to do His will; a few thanked Dr. Raymond most heartily for his faithful words about keeping the Sabbath; so this noble servant of God returned to his city home, comforted by the thought that his efforts in that direction had not been lost.

To others it had been only a time of gayety; few thoughts of Him who laid the foundations of these hills, and clothed them in living green, had entered their minds; earthly things had so filled the hours that God had been crowded out of their thoughts. By many of God's dear children the Sabbaths had been misspent or frittered away, so that they left those scenes of glorious beauty, which should have led them heavenward, with souls dwarfed and starved, for how can a Christian grow and thrive without these precious days?

Ah, these unhallowed, broken Sabbaths! will they ever be redeemed from profanation? Yes, the time is coming, the glad millennial time, the Sabbath of the world, when every day will be holy to the Lord; but there will be *one* of unrivalled brightness—a peerless gem among the seven—whose dawning will be hailed with delight by all hearts. With the first beams of

that blessed resurrection morning the eager throngs will hasten to the house of God, one saying to another, "Come, let us go up and worship, let us rejoice and sing praises, for Jesus Christ is risen to-day." Not one among all the joyful throng will fail to remember and sanctify the day which commemorates the world's redemption from the power of sin and death.

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THE END.

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